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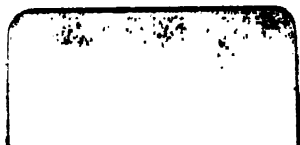
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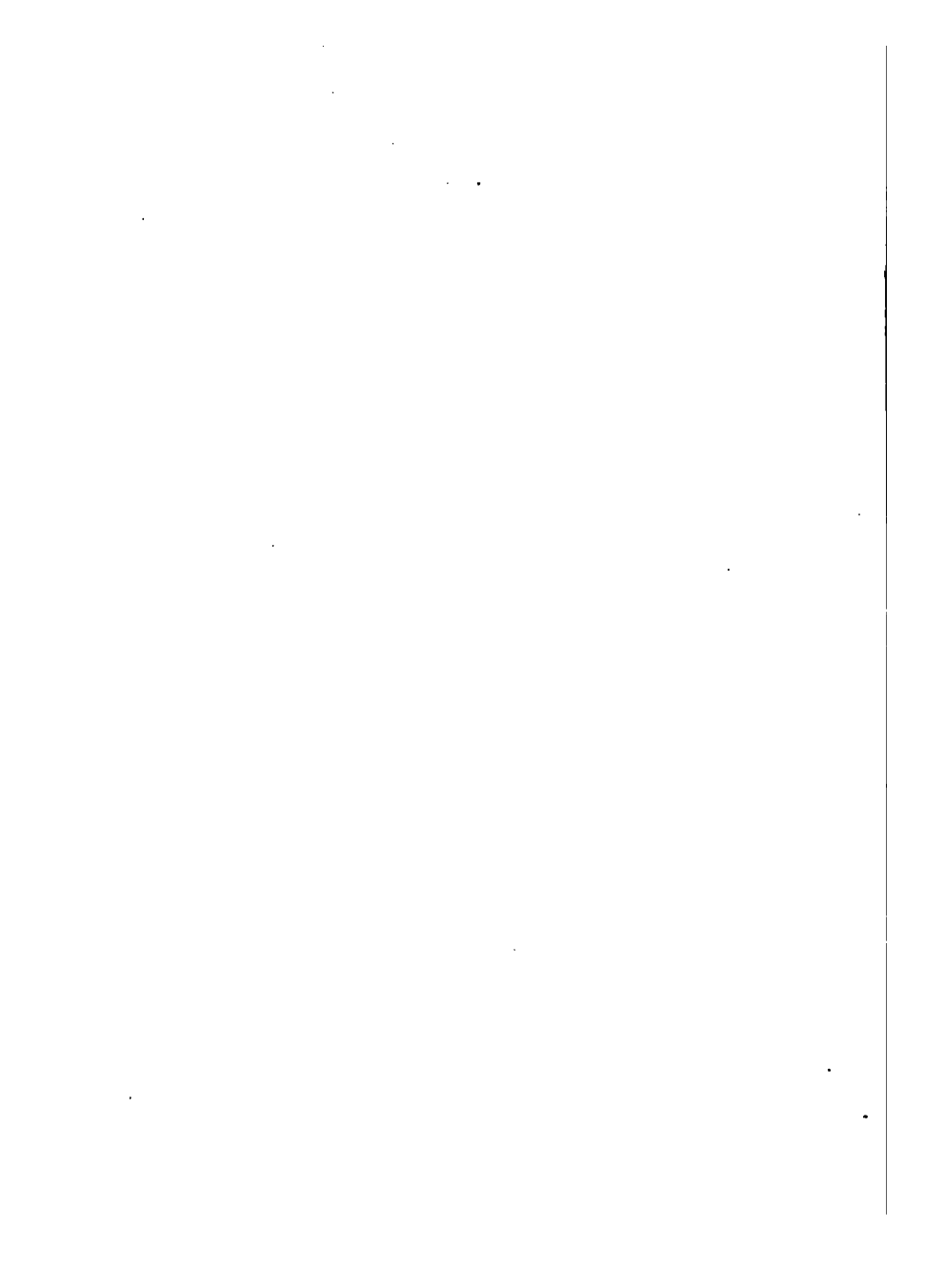
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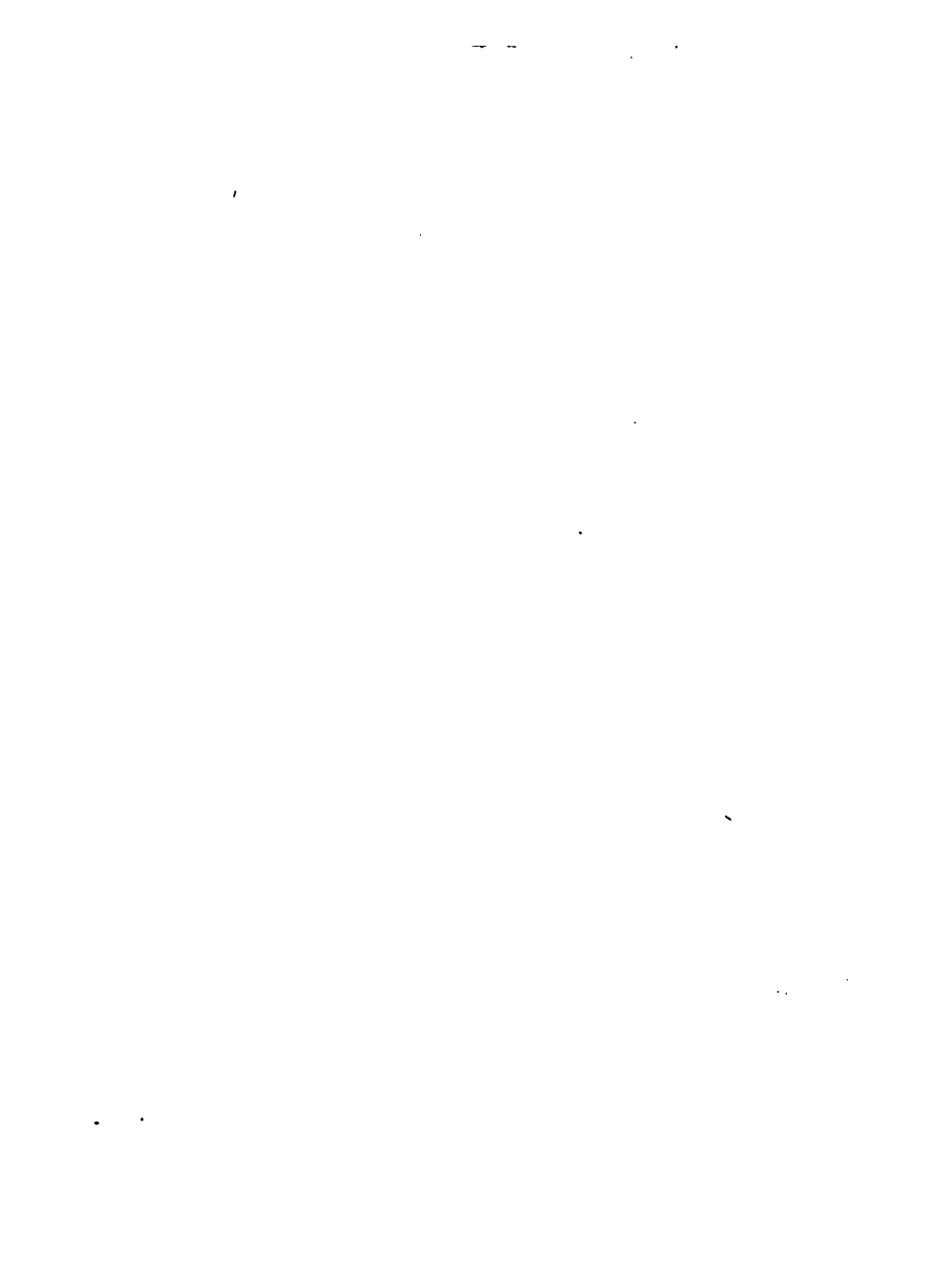
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AUTHORS' BIRTHDAYS

FIRST SERIES

CONTAINING EXERCISES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE
BIRTHDAYS OF

Poe, Longfellow, T. B. Read, Irving, Whitman,
H. B. Stowe, Hawthorne, Holmes, Cooper,
Baneroff, Bryant, Whittier

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C. W. BARDEEN

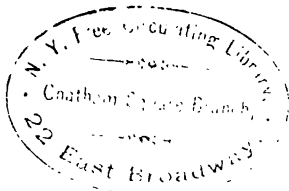
EDITOR OF THE SCHOOL BULLETIN



SYRACUSE, N. Y.
C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER

1898

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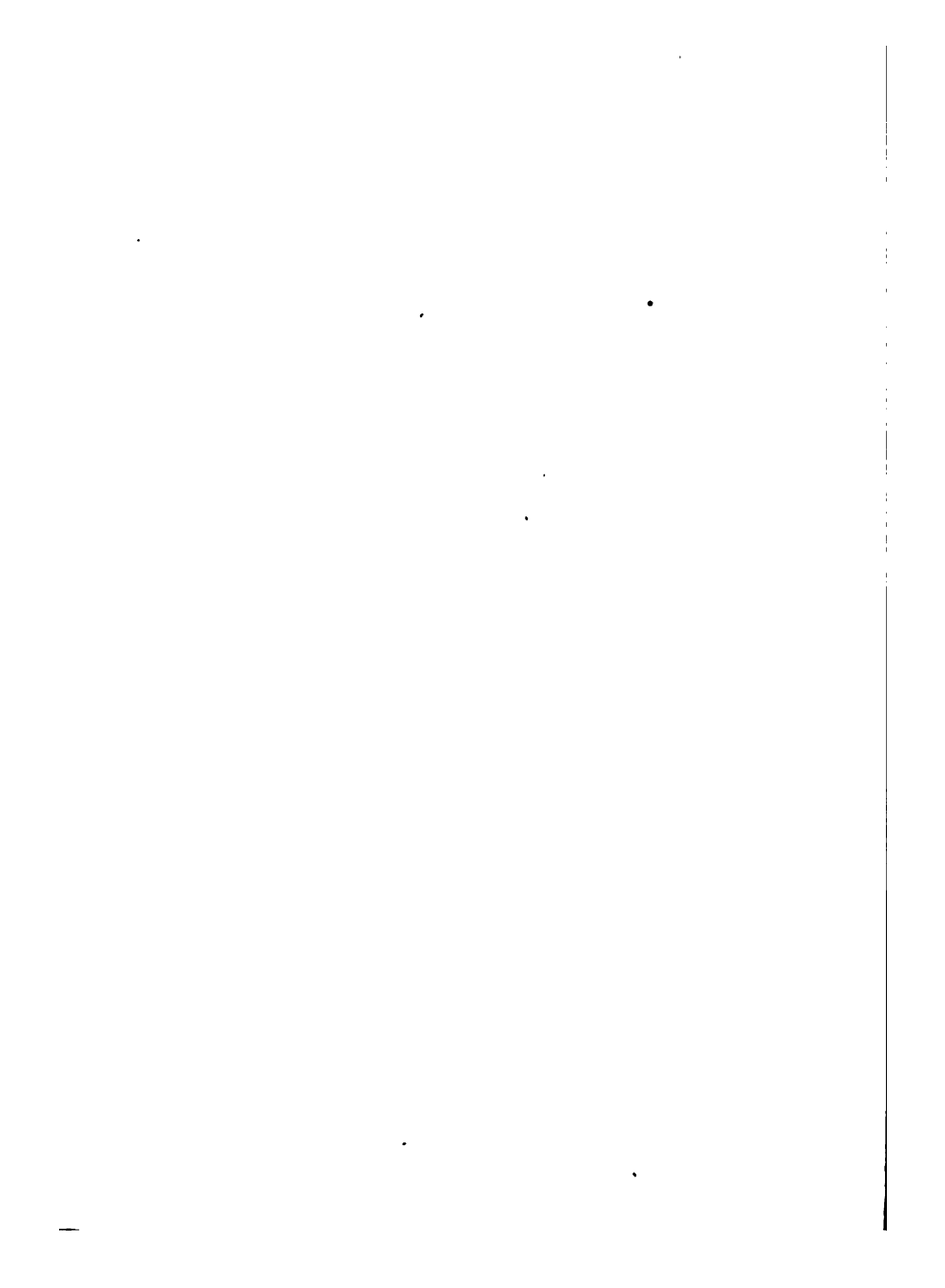
 $\frac{a}{v. 1}$ PREFACE

The articles in *The School Bulletin* which are here reprinted were written with a single purpose—to furnish public exercises to be used in schools, each of which should make upon every pupil present a distinct impression of the author named, his life, his character, his writings, and his distinctive place in literature. That they have served this purpose in hundreds of schools the letters that have come in from every direction testify. This volume gives them a more convenient form, and makes them available as a side-help for literature classes.

The articles will be continued in *The School Bulletin*, and will be reprinted annually in volumes like this, until the list embraces the best-known names in American literature.

SYRACUSE, Dec. 28, 1897.

(8)



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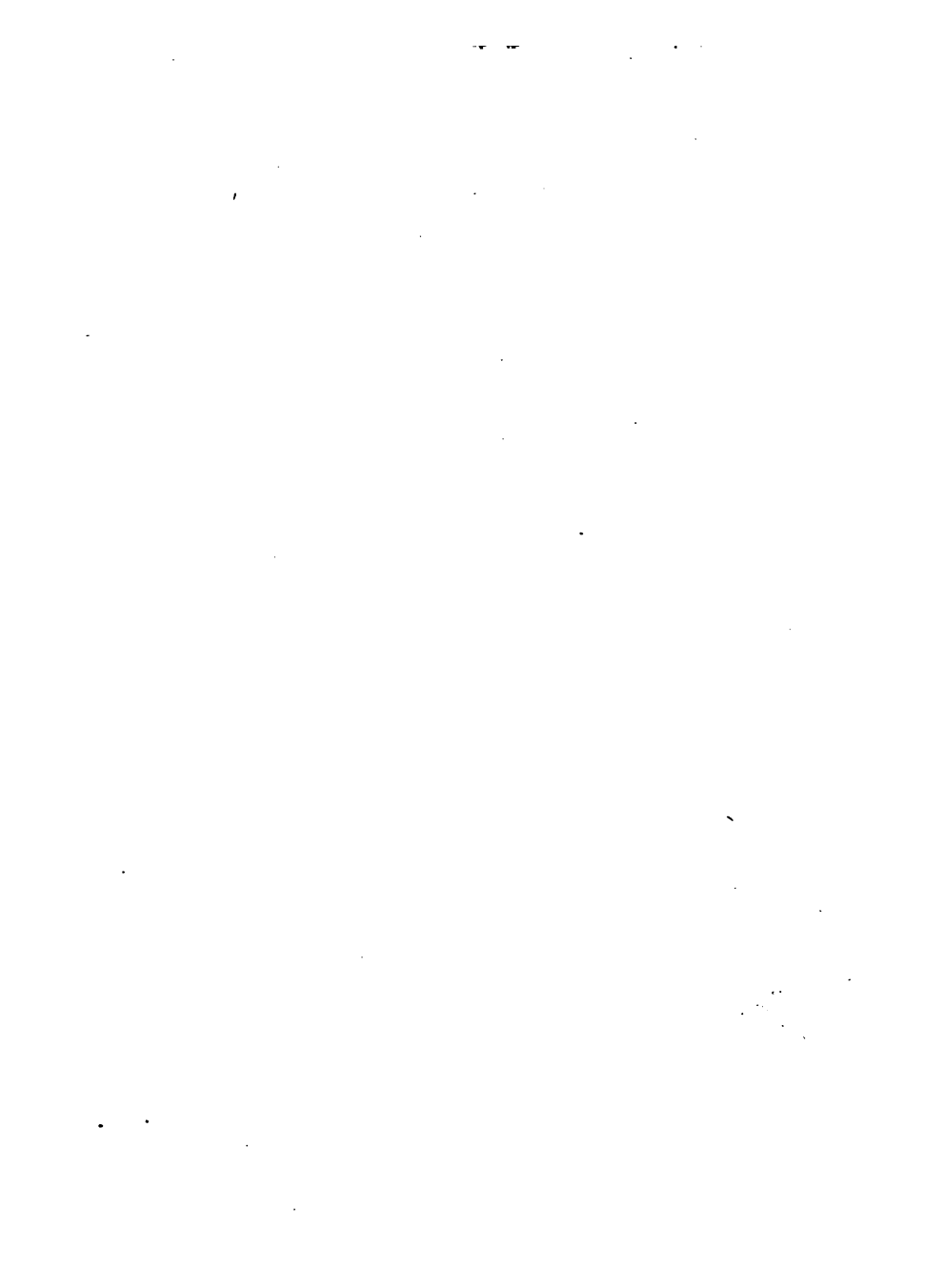
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AB



him out of college and put him into the counting-room. He ran away to Boston, and at 18 he found a publisher for his first book, "Tamerlane and other Poems". The book made little impression, and he enlisted as United States soldier, serving two years, until he was discharged to enter West Point. He neglected and despised his military duties, and was dismissed from the service within a year.

II

He settled in Baltimore and began to write prose tales. At 24, when he was almost starving, he took a \$100 prize for a story. This called attention to him, and he became a writer for literary journals. When he was 26 years old his adopted father died without mentioning him in his will. He moved to Richmond, and became an assistant editor, but soon lost the place, probably through intemperance, and went to New York, where his mother-in-law partially supported him by keeping boarders. In 1838 he moved to Philadelphia, struggled along for five years in ill-paid literary work, but lost his place again, and in 1844 moved to New York, and continued to wrestle with poverty.

III

In 1835, when he was 36 years old, his poem "The Raven" appeared, and at once gave him entirely new standing among literary men. But though it brought him distinction, it left him still dependent upon irregular literary work. In 1846 he moved to Fordham, into a cottage still standing at the top of Fordham Hill on Kingsbridge road, where he devoted himself mainly to "Eureka", a prose poem in which he expected to revolutionize physical and metaphysical science. He died in a hospital in Baltimore on Oct. 7, 1849.

IV

His life work was as a journalist. In 1833 he became a contributor to the Baltimore *Saturday Visitor*, and in 1835 he began work on the *Southern Literary Messenger*, of Richmond. In 1840 he became associate editor of Burton's *Gentleman's Magazine* and the next year editor of *Graham's Magazine*. This position he gave up in 1842, and in 1844 he became a hack writer on the New York *Evening Mirror*. In Feb., 1845, he became associate editor of the *Broadway Journal*, and afterwards editor and proprietor, purchasing his partner's interest with a note for \$50 endorsed by Horace Greeley.

He struggled heroically to maintain it, but it died at the close of the year. In 1846 he published in Godey's *Lady's Book* six numbers of "Literati", papers of caustic contemporary criticism.

V

He was at first successful as an editor. He raised the circulation of the *Southern Literary Messenger* from 200 to 5,000, and of *Graham's Magazine* during the fifteen months that he had charge of it from 8,000 to 40,000. In all his editorial work he published



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW,
1807-1882

his stories; but the most marked feature was his criticism of contemporary writers, which was bold and severe, terribly in earnest, especially impatient of artistic imperfection.

Naturally it raised up for him many enemies. Especially virulent were his repeated charges of plagiarism against Longfellow, to which the gentle poet made only this reply:

The harshness of his criticism I have never attributed to anything but the irritation of a sensitive nature chafed by some indefinite sense of wrong.

VI

His critical power was on the whole sound.



ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING,
1809-1861



ALFRED TENNYSON, 1809-1861

He was the first in this country to recognize the genius of Mrs. Browning, saying she had surpassed her contemporaries of either sex except Tennyson; to whom as to Dickens, Longfellow, and Hawthorne he brought early applause¹; and while he was mistaken in his estimate of Carlyle and Emerson, his judgment has in most other cases been confirmed by posterity. He was the first to mark



WASHINGTON IRVING, 1783-1859



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, 1794-1874

the limitations of such literary heroes of the day as Irving, Bryant, and Cooper¹. For some time he conducted an intimate correspondence with Lowell, to whom he wrote that no man in America had excited in him so much admiration; but as Longfellow's friend Lowell could not help resenting Poe's charges against Longfellow, and

afterwards Poe lowered the tone of his appreciation of Lowell. From the introductory chapter of "Barnaby Rudge" he foretold the plot of the entire book, which made Dickens humorously accuse him of diabolical power.

VII

Until just before his death his literary reputation rested mostly upon his tales. Stedman says that Poe and Hawthorne were the last of the romancers. Poe showed the fire, the richness, the instability of the tropics; Hawthorne the abiding strength and passion of the North. The New Englander



had the profounder insight; the Southerner's magic was that of the necromancer, who resorts to spells and devices, and when some apparition by chance responds to

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, 1804-1864 his incantation, he is bewildered by the phantom he himself has raised.

His stories became known in 1833, when he won the \$100 prize offered by the Baltimore *Saturday Visiter*, by his "Manuscript Found in a Bottle". Ten years later he took another \$100 prize for his story "The Gold-bug". His stories are full of gloom and

mystery. He delighted in the fantastic and grotesque, and was utterly wanting in humor "except of a kind which sends a chill down the reader's back and implies a contempt for bodies and souls, for the perils, helplessness, and meanness of the stricken human race."

VIII

His pay for his literary work was meagre. His salary on the *Southern Literary Messenger* was at first \$10 a week, but was afterwards raised to \$15 a week; when he gave up his place he had promise of a rise to \$20 a week. On Burton's *Magazine* he began work at \$50 a month, and his pay on the *Broadway Journal* was at first \$1 a column. His letters show that on *Graham's Magazine* he received about \$4 a page. For "The Raven" he was paid a bare ten dollars. His books brought him scarcely anything, his lectures would not draw hearers, and much of the time he was without employment. He who was a boy had been surrounded with every luxury was as a man so poor that he sometimes declined invitations for want of sufficient clothing; and a visitor to his Fordham cottage found his wife dying of con-

sumption, shivering in winter with no other bed-clothes than sheets and counterpane, eking out the warmth by a cat that lay upon her breast, and her husband's overcoat thrown upon the bed.

IX

His love for this wife, his own cousin, was the brightest feature of his character. He married her before she was 14 years old, and he always watched over her tenderly, almost with worship. When she first ruptured a blood vessel he was in despair, and he claimed that it was this that first drove him to the use of narcotics and stimulants. Her mother lived with them and supported the family, taking care of such money as Poe was able to earn and eking out the income by taking boarders. After the death of his wife early in 1847 the mother still kept house for him, even after he became engaged successively to two other women; after his death she mourned him sincerely, and defended his memory.

X

In appearance he realized the ideal poet. He was slight and erect of figure, athletic,

well moulded. In his youth, perhaps emulating Byron's swimming across the Hellespont, he swam six miles in the James river against a strong tide, and walked back unfatigued¹. Even in his last years he was proud of the distance he could jump. His head was finely modelled, his forehead and temples large, his hands fair as a woman's, his mien such that even the garb of poverty could never disguise the gentleman. In



IN EARLY LIFE

early life his face was handsome and intellectual, his hair dark and clustering, his eyes a clear, sad gray violet, large, lustrous with expression, often "flashing with the electric light of feeling and of thought". His voice was soft and musical, his movement easy and quiet, his bearing such that no failure could humble it, his melancholy habitual but thoughtful. N. P. Willis said of him that

he never smiled^s. In after years his bearing



IN LATER LIFE

became dramatic and defiant, showing the bitterness of scorn, the disdain of an habitual sneer, and the tremor of irresolution ; yet it was always fastidiously refined, and his deference to wo-

man remained a marked characteristic, while his conversation was to the last genuine and fascinating.

XI

His character showed many inconsistencies. In his youth he considered pride the distinctive manly quality. His struggles with poverty cankered him. All through life he felt that if he could have had money and leisure instead of being driven like a pack-horse for his daily bread he could have accomplished what other men scarce dreamed of. Gratitude was in him a lively sense of favors about to come. He forgot any bene-

fits conferred in the past if he met with a refusal or a harsh criticism. He was self-willed, capricious, imperious; originally with generous impulses but not steadily kind or amiable. Never knowing a mother's care he was a lonely boy, and his young manhood was weary, worn, and discontented. At West Point it was a joke among the cadets that he had secured the appointment for his son and then taken it himself. As he grew older and yielded to intoxicants his life became irregular, his manner eccentric, his disposition querulous. He was reserved, isolated, dreamy, with fantastic moods. His engagement with Mrs. Whitman was broken off because he was intoxicated upon the morning of the marriage, and two weeks before the day set for his marriage with another woman he was picked up drunk upon the streets of Baltimore and died in a hospital.

XII

Stedman, his most discriminating biographer, says of him :

He was a man inebriate when sober, his brain surging with emotion; and a stimulant that only served to steady common men bewildered him. His mature years were a battle with inherent taint, in-

creased by drugging in infancy and by the convivial usages of his guardian's household. Bearing in mind the lack of self-control inherent in Celtic and southern natures, he made a plucky fight.

But he lost the fight and died disgraced.

His closest friend said of him :

Nothing so solitary, nothing so hopeless, nothing so desolate as his spirit in its darker moods has been instanced in the literary history of the nineteenth century.

XIII

Of his poems he says himself :

Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making at any time any serious effort in what under happier circumstances would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose but a passion, and the passions should be held in reverence. They must not—they cannot, at will be excited with an eye to the paltry compensations and the more paltry commendations of mankind.

His first book was published when he was eighteen years old. The second volume was printed for private circulation just before he entered West Point, and the third just afterward ; but none of them attracted much attention. It was the publication of "The Raven" in 1845 that first gave him acknowledged rank. His biographer says :

No great poem ever published established itself so immediately, so widely, and so imperishably in men's minds.¹

Mrs. Browning said of it,

This vivid writing—this *power which is felt*—has produced a sensation here in England. Some of my friends are taken by the fear of it, and some by the music.

The general impression it has produced is that of the outpouring of a passionate spirit; yet Poe himself claimed that it was constructed in pure artifice, mechanically built up with the purpose of producing effect upon the reader. Much more simple and direct is "Annabel Lee", his last lyric, which illustrates his ear for rhythm and melody, and at the same time is a genuine lament for his lost wife.

XIV

ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee ;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee ;
So that her highborn kinsman came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever disaveer my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:
For the moon never beams, without bringing me
dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee ;

And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee ;
 And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
 Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride
 In the sepulcher there by the sea,
 In her tomb by the sounding sea.

XV

It was his theory of poetry, in which he



SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
 1772-1834

was a disciple of Coleridge, that the highest tone of beauty is sadness caused by the pathos of existence and our inability to grasp the unknown. Of all beautiful woman is

the supremest. Her death is the saddest loss and therefore the most poetical topic in the world. He would treat this musically by application of the refrain, increasing the sorrowful loveliness of his poem by the contrast of something homely, fantastic, and quaint². Almost his only exception to this theory is "The Bells". It was written not

long before his death, when he seemed little more than a wreck. He was visiting a lady friend, who persuaded him to drink tea in a conservatory whose open windows admitted the sound of church bells, and begged him to write something ; but he declined saying :

"I so dislike the sound of the bells to-night I cannot write. I have no subject—I am exhausted."

His friend wrote the title,

"The Bells, by E. A. Poe,"

and underneath,

"The bells ; the little silver bells !"

and asked him to finish the stanza. When he had done so she wrote,

"The heavy iron bells ;"

and he also finished that stanza, and so wrote the poem, his friend writing the first line of each stanza¹. He afterwards elaborated it after his fashion, and as finally published it is in itself perhaps the most pleasing of all his poems.

"We can never read it without pausing after every verse to let the *peals of sound* die away on the bosom of the palpitating air,

that we may commence the succeeding stanza
in silence^s."

XVI

THE BELLS

I

Hear the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells !

What a world of merriment their melody foretells !
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night !
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight ;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells !

What a world of happiness their harmony foretells !
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight !
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon !

Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells !
How it swells !
How it dwells
On the Future ! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells.

III *

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells !
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells !
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright !
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire

"I was astonished one night in watching a conflagration, and repeating, amid the clash and clang of the alarm-bells, the third stanza of the poem, to find how marvellously the movement of the verse *timed* with the peals of sound, and how truly the poem reproduced the sense of danger which the sound of the bells, and the glare and mad ascension of the flames, and the pallor of the moonlight conveyed. All the poetry of a conflagration is in that stanza, both in sound and sense, and Dante himself could not have rendered it more truly."

Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells !
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair !
How they clang and clash, and roar.
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air !
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows :
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the
bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells !

IV

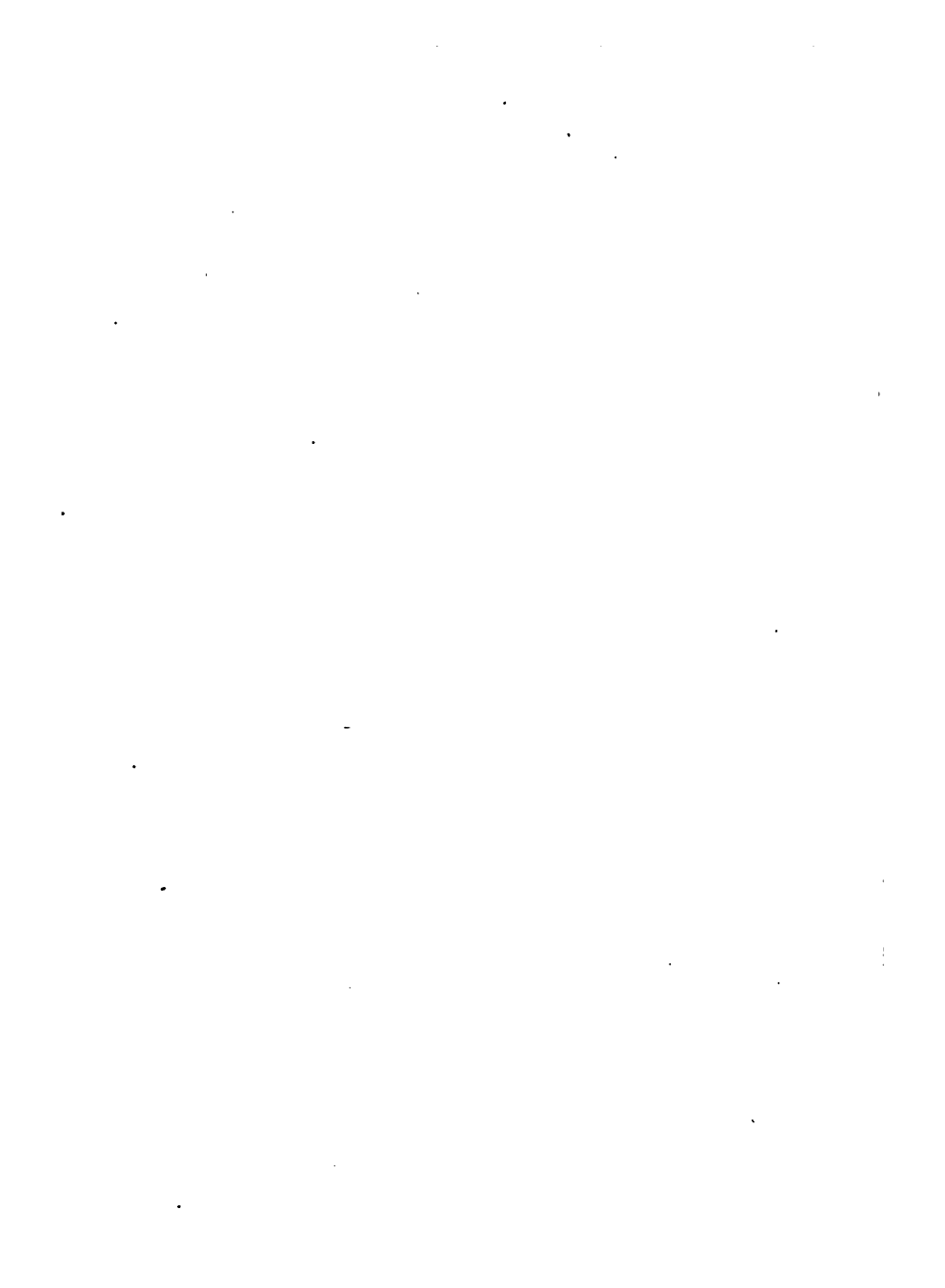
Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells !
What a world of solemn thought their monody com-
pels !
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright,

At the melancholy menace of their tone ;
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls :
And their king it is who tolls ;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A psan from the bells !
And his merry bosom swells
With the psan of the bells !
And he dances, and he yells ;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the psan of the bells—
Of the bells :
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells ;
Keeping time, time, time,

As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

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- ⁵ Mrs. Osgood.



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

FEBRUARY 27

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

I

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whom the *Encyclopædia Britannica* calls the best loved singer of the English race, was born Feb. 27, 1807, at Portland, Me. He entered Bowdoin college as sophomore at 15, and was graduated in 1825, Hawthorne being a classmate and afterward among his intimate friends. He spent three years and a half in Europe to fit himself for the chair of modern languages at Bowdoin, and served from 1829 to 1835 as professor there. On receiving the same appointment in Harvard college he spent fifteen months abroad in further preparation, and from 1836 to 1854 held that place at Harvard. The rest of his life he gave to literary work, residing at Cambridge. In 1843 he paid a third visit to Europe, and in 1868-69 a fourth. In 1879 he wrote of

the recurrence in his life of the number 18. He was 18 years old when he graduated from college ; 18 years later he married his second wife ; he lived with her 18 years ; it was in 1879, 18 years since she died ; his professorship at Harvard lasted 18 years ; and he was then four times 18 years old². He died March 24, 1882.

II

As a college professor he was liked by the students and was personally an inspiration to many of them. During the six years he was at Bowdoin he found himself more and more chafed at the restraints of a country town, and his 18 years at Harvard grew at the last to be almost an intolerable burden. He wrote in his diary on June 18, 1851 :

Examination in my department ; always to me a day of anguish and of exhaustion¹.

He did himself very little teaching, his responsibility being mainly to direct the work of the native teachers in each language and to deliver lectures ; but every year he felt more and more that this was consuming in treadmill work the time and strength he ought to give to authorship, and when at last released he snapped his bonds with a feeling of relief.

III

For never was man more absorbed in purpose than he in his literary work. He began to write poetry when he was in school, and it may gratify other aspiring writers to know that his first poetry showed little promise of the eminence he afterward obtained. He was made class poet, but for eight years he gave up further efforts in this direction, thinking that perhaps his strength lay in prose. He had published elementary textbooks in his own subjects even while at Bowdoin, and he contributed articles, mainly upon these subjects, to the *North American*

Review and other magazines. He also wrote two stories for *The Token*, and he began a series of sketches of travel called "The Schoolmaster", which afterwards appeared as *Outre-Mer* (be-



WASHINGTON IRVING, 1783-1859

yond the sea), coming out in parts like Irving's "Sketch Book". In 1839 he pub-

lished "Hyperion", and in 1849 "Kavanagh", both in prose, but of a pensive, poetical character, which of themselves would never have made him famous.

IV

In 1832 he delivered the poem before the Bowdoin chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa society, and the next year gave the same poem before the Harvard chapter, Edward Everett being the orator. But it was not until his establishment in the Craigie house that he began once more the serious effort to write poetry, the "Psalm of Life" published in the *Knickerbocker* of October, 1838, being the first token he gave of extraordinary ability. He afterwards wrote :

I kept it some time in manuscript, unwilling to show it to anyone, it being a voice from my inmost heart at a time when I was rallying from depression.

He received multitudes of testimonials that it had been an inspiration to others.

V

(Here let some pupil recite "The Psalm of Life", found in any collection of Longfellow's poems. In the Household edition

it is on page 2 ; it is given in the SCHOOL BULLETIN ix. 15.)

VI

In 1839 he published his "Voices of the Night", including with poems lately written a few selected from his earlier publications in newspapers and magazines. Besides the "Psalm of Life", the "Hymn to the Night", "The Reaper and the Flowers", and "Footsteps of Angels" are known wherever the English language is spoken. New editions were soon called for, and he found himself at a leap reckoned among the real poets. Another volume, called "Ballads and Other Poems", appeared in 1842. This included "The Skeleton in Armor"; "The Village Blacksmith"; "Excelsior", which the motto of the Empire State suggested (SCHOOL BULLETIN, ix. 16); and "The Rainy Day", which last the readers of his life will recognize as characteristic of his own experience.

VII

THE RAINY DAY

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary ;
It rains, and the wind is never weary ;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,

But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart ! and cease repining ;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining ;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

VIII

The *Spanish Student*, a musical drama, appeared in 1843. This was a comedy, and in subject, in treatment, and in almost every characteristic stands apart and different from all his other works. While there are fine passages, it is as a whole an imitation that a man of much less ability could have equalled. *Longfellow* had humor enough to be thoroughly companionable, but not the wit to form a congruous element in his poetry. He was fond of puns ; he jots down in his journal that autobiography is what biography *ought to be* ; and his humorous patches upon the “ *New England Tragedies* ” are like old

cloth upon a new garment. But "The Spanish Student" will always be remembered kindly for the serenade it contains.

IX

(Here have "Stars of the Summer Night" sung in an adjoining room. The music may be found in "Carmina Princetonia", page 75.)

X

Another collection of poetry appeared in 1846. "Evangeline" was published in 1847, and is considered his greatest poem. It was published by itself; and it was written in hexameters, the practicability of which in English was much discussed. It was also noteworthy in that it was based upon a purely American theme. Other attempts in this direction were "Hiawatha", which appeared in 1855, in which he sought to combine all the principal Indian legends, also in unusual metre; "The Courtship of Miles Standish" in 1858; and "The New England Tragedies", in 1868. His most ambitious work was his "Christus", which included besides these "Tragedies" "The Golden Legend", first published in 1851, and "The Divine Tragedy", published in 1871.

XI

But it is not his more ambitious poems by which he will be remembered. The distinctive quality of Longfellow's poetry is perhaps best described by Hawthorne in a letter written Jan. 23, 1847 :



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, 1804-1864

Common things—or what might be mistaken for such—are seen to possess a rareness after you have held them in your hand.

In the collection of "The Seaside and the Fireside" the single poem "Resignation" will bring comfort to a thousand hearts where but one will glance over the "Christus".

XII

RESIGNATION

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there !
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead ;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted !

Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise.
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors ;
Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death ! What seems so is transition .
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection.
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air ;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

42 *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her ;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child ;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace ;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay ;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

XIII

It must be confessed that Longfellow never reached the great heights. Stedman quotes Milton's requirement that poetry should be simple, sensuous, passionate. Longfellow's poetry was simple ; it was sensuous in what charms the ear and eye ; but passionate it

never was^s. He quotes from Cowley approvingly :

The soul must be filled with bright and delightful ideas when it undertakes to communicate delight to others, which is the main end of poetry.

It is curious to note in his journal that he considered great crises hardly adapted to poetry. He writes in 1852 :

Every evening we read ourselves into despair in that tragic book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin". It is too melancholy, and makes one's blood boil too hotly.

This does not show the poet of high inspiration. He knew little of the poet's frenzy. He was a steady writer, laying out so much work per day. He writes :

I am confident it is often from sheer laziness when a poet refrains from writing because he is "not in the mood". Until he begins he can hardly tell whether he is in the mood or not. It is the reluctance toward the manual labor of recording one's thoughts, perhaps to the mental labor of settling them in due order.

Never was there a more incessant worker. With him things won were done. Joy lay in the doing. When a new book was given to the printers the compositors could not set it up fast enough for him, and before it was finished he was already casting about for some new volume to succeed it.

XIV

He had no cause to complain of the pecuniary results he received for his work. During his college course he got from one to two dollars each for his poems, but in 1840-41 he got \$15 to \$20 each, and from 1844 to 1850, \$50 each. Then they began to command \$100 to \$150. Before he was fifty years old the American sales of his books amounted to 325,000 volumes, and of "*Miles Standish*", which was issued soon after, 25,000 were sold the first week in Boston and 10,000 in London. For the first edition of "*Seaside and Fireside*" he received \$1,000, and for advance sheets of "*Miles Standish*" he received \$750 from England. In 1857 he refused an offer of \$1,000 from the *New York Ledger* for ten poems of any length; and for "*The Hanging of the Crane*" the *New York Ledger* paid him \$3,000, besides \$1,000 more to Sam Ward for conducting the negotiation. He received \$1,000 each for the right merely to print in *Harpers' Magazine* the poems "*Keramos*" and "*Morituri Salutamus*", while he still retained the copyright.

XV

As his income from his professorship had always been comfortable, and as his second wife brought him wealth and luxury, the enormous sums he received from his books put within his power all that money could furnish to a man of simple tastes. But he had his troubles like other men. His eyes were weak, with temptation to overwork them. The winter climate of Cambridge was severe for him, and he knew susceptibility to cough and the twinges of neuralgia. He was never a wholly contented man, and he practised resignation where others would have been glad to give thanks.

He was not even wholly free from jealousy.

He writes in his journal Feb. 24, 1853 :



Mr. and Mrs. Stowe came to dinner. Him I have known since my college days. Her I have never seen before. How she is shaking the world with her Uncle Tom's

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, 1812-1896 Cabin ! At one step

she has reached the top of the stair-case by which the rest of us climb on our knees year after year. Never was there such a *coup-de-main* as this! A million of copies of a book within the first year of its publication!

XVI

But the touch of envy in this exclamation is a light one. He was a generous and appreciative critic, especially of the work of his friends. He was keenly sensitive to criticism, and encountered a good deal of it that



EDGAR ALLAN POE, 1809-1849

was unkind and unjust. But it was his habit to preserve nothing that could annoy, and he never felt rancor. When Poe, who had attacked him most virulently, died in misery and disgrace,

he wrote to a friend:

What a melancholy death is that of Mr. Poe,—a man so endowed with genius. I never knew him personally, but have always entertained the highest appreciation of his powers as a prose writer and a

poet. His prose is remarkably vigorous, direct, and yet affluent; and his verse has a particular charm of melody, an atmosphere of true poetry about it, which is very winning. The harshness of his criticisms I have never attributed to anything but the irritation of a sensitive nature chafed by some indefinite sense of wrong.

XVII

Few men have had the opportunities of birth and environment that came to Longfellow. His grandfather was a judge, his father a lawyer and congressman, his mother a lineal descendant of the Priscilla who married John Alden. His father was not wealthy, but he was able to give him a college education and an equally long period of travel in Europe, with letters of introduction that opened to him every desirable social opportunity in all the cities he visited. He received the degree of LL.D. at 21, and was a professor at 22. At Harvard he succeeded to the chair of George Ticknor, and gave it up to James Russell Lowell. The best men of both hemispheres were proud to be his friends, and every distinguished traveller that came to Boston called on him. Ole Bull, Jenny Lind, even

the Fox sisters sought him out. Whoever was at the time famous thought it a privilege to meet him.

XVIII

Among his friends Charles Sumner, Louis



LOUIS AGASSIZ, 1807-1898

Agassiz, and President Felton of Harvard college were closer than brothers. These three it is he describes in his book of sonnets, under the title "Three Friends of Mine".

Mine".

Who can measure the uplifting influence of three friends who have left such an impression as this ?

THREE FRIENDS OF MINE

When I remember them, those friends of mine,

Who are no longer here, the noble three,

Who half my life were more than friends to me,

And whose discourse was like a generous wine,

I most of all remember the divine

Something, that shone in them, and made us see
The archetypal man, and what might be
The amplitude of Nature's first design.

XIX

In his family life he was equally blessed.
His first wife was his but for four years.
She died at Rotterdam in 1835. His memory
of her appeared in his first published volume,
in what he called his third Psalm of Life,
under the title "Footsteps of Angels".

FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS

When the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight ;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful firelight
Dance upon the parlor wall ;

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door ;
The beloved, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more ;

He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life !

50 *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

They, the wholly ones and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Spake with us on earth no more !

And with them the Being Beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes in blessings ended,
Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died !

XX

How happy must have been his relations
with a being of whom it is a pleasure to
think that she is sitting in spirit in the

vacant chair at his side, her hand on his, her eyes fixed on him. When his daughter Fanny died he says in his journal :

For a long time I sat by her alone in the darkened library. The twilight fell softly on her placid face, and the white flowers which she held in her little hands. In the deep silence the bird sang from the hall, a sad strain, a melancholy requiem. It touched and soothed me.

When summoned home by news of his mother's sudden death he says :

I sat all that night alone with her, but without terror, almost without sorrow, so tranquil had been her death. A sense of peace came over me, as if therein had been no shock nor jar in nature, but a harmonious close to a long life.

Only a good husband, a good father, a good son could feel like this in the presence of the dead.

XXI

In his "Hyperion" he had described under a thin veil his meeting and journeying in Switzerland with Frances Elizabeth Appleton, then 19 years old, and he married her in 1843. His union with her was as perfect as that of the Brownings, and his life with her was one constant joy. The repeated

entries concerning "F." in his journal show how incomplete was any happiness she did not share. The delightful old Craigie house, in which he had already lived, had been purchased for them as a wedding gift, five beautiful children grew up about them, and their family life was in every way ideal. On July 9, 1861, his wife was sitting in the library with her two little girls, engaged in sealing up some small packages of their curls which she had just cut off; when from a match fallen upon the floor her light summer dress caught fire. She was ablaze in an instant, rushed into his arms with a wild cry, and never spoke afterwards*. From that shock he never recovered.

For a time he was numbed. He found his only refuge in work, and years were given in a translation of Dante. But his children were about him, and they kept him alive. He has described them in one of his favorite poems, "The Children's Hour".

XXII

Perhaps the single adjective that would best describe his life is blameless. He was high-minded from a boy, and his instincts

and tastes freed him from most of the temptations to which young men are subject.

At the funeral service in Harvard college chapel Dr. Holmes said :

The accord between the character and life of Mr. Longfellow and his poems was complete. His poetry touched the hearts of his readers because it was the sincere expression of his own. The sweetness, the cheerfulness, the grace, the purity of his verses were the image of his own soul, but ample as this expression of himself was it fell short of the truth. The man was more and better than the poet.

Intimate however as was the concord between the poet and his poetry, there was much in the man to which he never gave utterance in words. He was a man of deep reserve. He kept the holy of holies within himself inviolable. Seldom does he admit his readers to even its outward precincts. He said, "The deepest experiences of life are too sacred to be shared with anyone whatsoever."

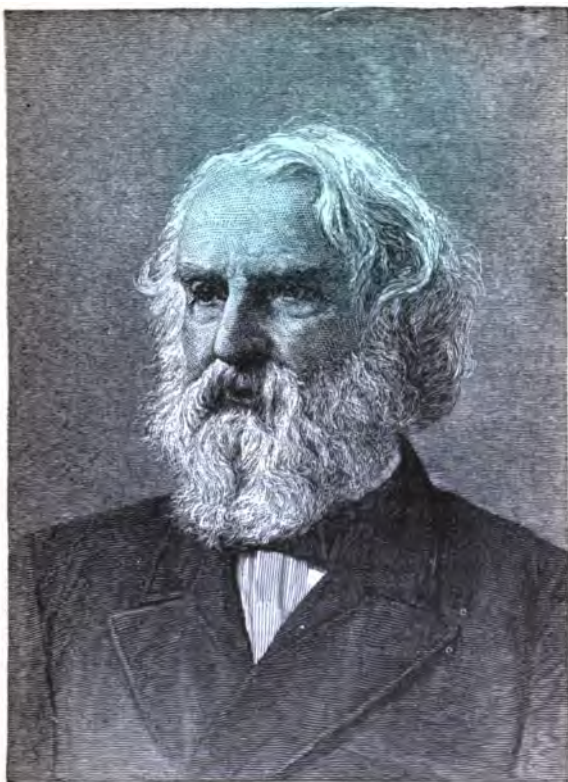
XXIII

Perhaps no man of fame so extended, and occupation so incessant, ever held himself so completely at the service of others. He was apparently always accessible and unfailingly kind. He seemed never to decline a request upon his time or purse. His delight

was in causing delight. No one ever knew him to refuse his autograph, to treat an unwarranted visitor abruptly, to forget the courtesy due to little children or social inferiors. He never shut himself out from the fellowship of any human creature to whom he supposed he could be of comfort or service⁷. His journal abounds with entries of days lost to his work because some visitor, unheralded and unintroduced, had appealed to his charity or his hospitality, and not in vain.

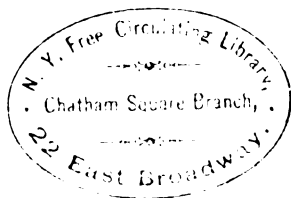
XXIV

In appearance he was most attractive. Hardly of medium stature, he was of symmetrical form and firmly knit. He had a leonine head, a face of remarkable beauty, forehead high and ample, eyes that kindled, nose straight and delicate, sensitive lips and chin, and the whole carried with a poise as princely as it was unconscious. His hair, changing with years from its original dark hue to a silvery white, combined with his full beard to give him an appearance of serene and winning majesty. His voice was low and de-



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

(55)



liciously attuned. His entire aspect was remarkable in its perfect union of beauty with strength'.

In his "Life of Charles Dickens", John Forster says in speaking of Longfellow's visit at Gadshill :

He possessed all the qualities of delightful companionship, the culture and the charm, which have no higher type than the accomplished and genial American.

John Ruskin wrote to him :

I have many things to say about the sense I have of the good you might do this old world by staying with us a little, and giving the peaceful glow of your fancy to our cold, troubled, unpeaceful spirit. Strange that both you and Norton come as such a *calm* influence to me and others.



JOHN RUSKIN. 1819-

XXV

On March 2, 1884, his bust in the poets' corner of Westminster Abbey was unveiled,

Final Tributes from Life-Long Friends 57

James Russell Lowell, then American min-



JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, 1819-1891

ister, delivering the address, and saying: "Never have I known a more beautiful character. * * *

His nature was consecrated ground, into which no unclean spirit could ever enter."

No epitaph could have been more worthy



than the remark made at his funeral by Ralph Waldo Emerson, himself already on the edge of the grave, his memory lost. After looking at Longfellow in his coffin, he said as he stepped back: "I have entirely forgotten that gentleman's name, but he was a sweet and beautiful soul."

than the remark made at his funeral by Ralph Waldo Emerson, himself already on the edge of the grave, his memory lost. After looking at Longfellow in his

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Thomas Buchanan Read



MARCH 12

THOS. BUCHANAN READ

I

Thomas Buchanan Read was born March

12, 1822, in Ches-

ter county, Pa.,

not far from

where Bayard

Taylor was born

three years later.

He was early be-

reft of his father.

In his twelfth year

his family re-

moved to Cincin-

nati, where he entered the studio of Clevelen-

ger, a sculptor. When his master went to

Europe he turned from sculpture to painting,

engaged himself to a house and sign painter,

doing shop work in the day time and paint-



BAYARD TAYLOR, 1825-1878

ing portraits at night. He became a wandering portrait-painter. In 1840 he removed to Boston and married. He painted portraits of Longfellow's children in a group which he called "The Morning Glories". This and his portrait of Mrs. Browning are the best known of his pictures. In 1846 he moved to Philadelphia, and edited a selection from the American female poets, with steel engravings from portraits he painted himself. In 1850 he sailed for Italy, where he spent a year, making the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Browning, and he went back again in 1853 to reside for a time in Florence and Rome. In 1858 he returned to Cincinnati, and he died in New York, May 11, 1872.

II

He also began at an early age to write verses, but without much encouragement until the timely and generous praise of Longfellow decided him to persevere. He began to write for magazines, and in 1846 he published his first volume.

Longfellow writes in his journal, Nov. 2, 1846 :

Yesterday I should have recorded a visit from Buchanan Read, the young poet-painter, who passed the night with us. He has a volume of poems in the press. He repeated one or two which pleased me very much.



III

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW, 1807-1882 He made Longfellow his model and always spoke of him with reverence. In "A Leaf from the Past", inscribed to Longfellow, he says :

In dreams like these, of calm delight,
I live again the wintry night,
When all was dark without, but all within was
bright—

When she, fit bride for such as thou,
She with the quiet, queenly brow,
Read from the minstrel's page with tuneful voice
and low^s.

IV

The first of his "Poems in Italy" is "To
H. W. L."

TO H. W. LONGFELLOW

Oh thou, the laureate of our western realms,
Singing at will beneath your Cambridge elms,
Charming that sacred mansion where the grand
Paternal Cincinnatus* of our land
Dwells, a majestic shadow—more than king;
Who, staidly smiling, hearkens while you sing,
Wouldst thou but build in Rome, we should behold
O'er Nero's ruins rise the enduring house of gold.

But I, a Troubadour born out of time,
From shrine to shrine, pour out my idle rhyme,
Impelled still onward with a love intense,
Singing for love (the only recompense),
Of one sweet lady, and perchance to be
But spurned at last by scornful Poesy².

V

He published a second volume of poems in Philadelphia in 1848, and when he returned from Italy in 1850 he made the acquaintance of the literary circles of London. Referring to this visit Mary Howitt says in her "*Reminiscences of My Later Life*" that Dante Rossetti had been much impressed by some lyrics in the Philadelphia *Courier* signed "A Miner", and a friend of his undertook to find out from Mr. Read who

* Craigie House where Longfellow lived, had been the headquarters of Washington.

VI

wrote them. "I am the writer of those poems", he replied with tears in his eyes.

There was, of course, nothing to be done after this marvellous discovery but instantly to carry off the prize to Rossetti. They found him in his studio quite absorbed working from a model. He just looked up as they entered, gave a sharp little nod, and went on painting.

Allingham, however, walked up to him and said, "I have brought you the poet of Hazeldell bodily."

Rossetti dropped his brush, and with a face glowing with excitement cried, "You don't say so!"

He quite overwhelmed the bashful stranger with his joyous acclamations, adding, "How delighted Woolner would be, for he prizes your poems as I do!" In the midst of the jubilation Holman Hunt entered.

Now, Read had a most intense desire to see Leigh Hunt, and this being divulged to the two pre-Raphaelites, who were busy, they deputed Allingham to carry their visitor to Leigh Hunt and see that he was treated with

due honor. Leigh Hunt, however, was out: so they returned to Rossetti and Holman Hunt, and spent a grand evening together².

VII

"The next time Buchanan Read came to us," Miss Howitt says, "we had perused his fresh and invigorating poems, and were delighted to see him again. And now, the ice being broken, we found him to be a very generous, grateful young man, possessing much original power and fine discrimination of art. He had been painting in Rossetti's studio, and in constant intercourse with his host, William Rossetti, Holman Hunt, and Woolner. As the day of his departure to Düsseldorf approached, a great gathering of all the P. R. B.'s took place, to commemorate his last evening in their midst. They read aloud his poetry, made much of him, and told such capital stories that some of them rolled on the carpet with laughter. But although they remained together until four or five o'clock in the morning, they could not part with him. He prolonged his stay, and, as he absented himself in their company from his lodgings at Mr. Chap-

man's in the Strand, it was reported that the pre-Raphaelites had carried off Read in a chariot of fire."

VIII

In the *North British Review* of this year Coventry Patmore, then in the height of his reputation as a poet and a critic, spoke of him as the most promising of living transatlantic poets, and declared that with the doubtful exception of Poe he knew of no one who had so much real feeling as was shown in some of Read's verses. His feeling was not very profound or masculine, but was real, and presented a refreshing contrast with the cold and clever manufactures which the most of his temper were imposing upon the world as expressions of feeling. He had a very high sense of natural beauty, and in proof of this the writer quoted "The Closing Scene", which was, he said, worth a whole album of "Excelsiors" and "Psalms of Life", and merited the fame which Gray's "Elegy" had attained without deserving it nearly so well.

IX

THE CLOSING SCENE

Within his sober realm of leafless trees

The russet year inhaled the dreamy air :

Like some tanned reaper in his hour of ease,
When all the fields are lying brown and bare.

The gray barns looking from their hazy hills
O'er the dim waters widening in the vales,
Sent down the air a greeting to the mills,
On the dull thunder of alternate falls.

All sights were mellowed and all sounds subdued,
The hills seemed farther and the streams sang low,
As in a dream the distant woodman hewed
His winter log with many a muffled blow.

The embattled forests, erewhile armed in gold,
Their banners bright with every martial hue,
Now stood, like some sad beaten host of old,
Withdrawn afar in time's remotest blue.

On slumbrous wings the vulture held his flight;
The dove scarce heard his sighing mate's complaint,
And like a star slow drowning in the light,
The village church-vane seemed to pale and faint.

The sentinel-cock upon the hill side crew—
Crew thrice, and all was stiller than before,—
Silent till some replying warder blew
His alien horn, and then was heard no more.

Where erst the jay, within the elm's tall crest,
Made garrulous trouble round her unfledged young,
And where the oriole hung her swaying nest,
By every light wind like a censer swung ;—

Where sang the noisy masons of the eaves,
The busy swallows, circling ever near,

Foreboding, as the rustic mind believes,
An early harvest and a plenteous year ;—
Where every bird which charmed the vernal feast,
Shook the sweet slumber from its wings at morn,
To warn the reaper of the rosy east,—
All now was songless, empty, and forlorn.
Alone from out the stubble piped the quail,
And croaked the crow through all the dreamy
gloom ;
Alone the pheasant, drumming in the vale,
Made echo to the distant cottage loom.
There was no bud, no bloom upon the bowers ;
The spiders wove their thin shrouds night by
night ;
The thistle-down, the only ghost of flowers,
Sailed slowly by, passed noiseless out of sight*.

X

Coventry Patmore died in 1896 almost forgotten, and the early work of the poet whom he lifted so high above Longfellow is little remembered.

In appearance what first struck a visitor was his size, or his lack of it. He was hardly five feet tall, and his wife was still smaller, so that their guests often felt as though they were taking part in a doll party. He was unconventional in his way, and Mr. Stoddard says of him :



THOMAS BUCHANAN READ

I never heard Read say a word that would indicate that he was a painter, nor—now I come to think of it—a word that would indicate that he was a poet. He might not have cared for his paintings but he must have cared for his poetry*.

XI

Of his poetry, one critic says :

It has many faults and many excellencies. Its chiefest fault is a too frequent use of pretty conceits, fanciful similitudes ; its chiefest excellence a dainty picturesqueness. Daintiness in some form or other,—in language or thought, in the grouping of objects,—is a marked feature of all Read's poetry.
* * * Were I to say what seems to me the weakest point of Read's poetry, and what I would like to

have weeded out of it, it would be fancy,—that seeming help, but real drawback to its beauty. Beauty is always intact in itself—a perfect whole—a spiritual thing; fancy is never more than a part, and always belongs to the outward, and consequently diminishes beauty whenever associated with it¹.

XII

Mr. Stoddard says :

He wrote from instinct and impulse and not from knowledge, but he wrote easily and carelessly. Attracted to the surface of things he reproduced their surfaces, content with what they revealed, careless of what they concealed, moved by fancy rather than feeling, his verse was often smothered by the fancies with which it was bestrown. The predominance of the fanciful over the imaginative was the poetic vice of the period here, and Read revelled in it, carried away by the example of his master, Longfellow, who was never so much himself as when he was indulging in a profusion of similes. * * * He is not at his best in his ambitious poems, in which the strain of prolonged effort is visible, but in his short swallow-flights, which are graceful and melodious and altogether tender and lovely. I would rather have written the song of his beginning "Give me the juice of the honey fruit" than anything I remember in American poetry. It is as perfect as the best poems of Lovelace or Suckling or Carew, and any poet great or small might be glad to have written it².

XIII

A SONG

Bring me the juice of the honey fruit,
The large translucent, amber-hued,
Rare grapes of southern isles, to suit
The luxury that fills my mood.

And bring me only such as grew
Where fairest maidens tend the bowers,
And only fed by rain and dew
Which first had bathed a bank of flowers.

They must have hung on spicy trees
In airs of far enchanted vales,
And all night heard the ecstasies
Of noble-throated nightingales :

So that the virtues which belong
To flowers may therein tasted be,
And that which hath been thrilled with song
May give a thrill of song to me.

For I would wake that string for thee
Which hath too long in silence hung,
And sweeter than all else should be
The song which in thy praise is sung².

XIV

Another poem of his that is often quoted shows the power of description in which he excelled.

DRIFTING

My soul to-day
Is far away,
Sailing the Vesuvian Bay ;
My wingéd boat,
A bird afloat,
Swims round the purple peaks remote :—
Round purple peaks
It sails and seeks
Blue inlets and their crystal creeks,
Where high rocks throw,
Through deeps below,
A duplicated golden glow.
Far, vague, and dim,
The mountains swim ;
While on Vesuvius' misty brim,
With outstretched hands,
The gray smoke stands
O'erlooking the volcanic lands.
Here Ischia smiles
O'er liquid miles ;
And yonder, bluest of the isles,
Calm Capri waits,
Her sapphire gates
Beguiling to her bright estates.
I heed not, if
My rippling skiff
Float swift or slow from cliff to cliff ;—
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise.

Under the walls
Where swells and falls
The Bay's deep breast at intervals
At peace I lie,
Blown softly by,
A cloud upon this liquid sky.

The day, so mild,
Is heaven's own child,
With Earth and Ocean reconciled ;—
The airs I feel
Around me steal
Are murmuring to the murmuring keel.

Over the rail
My hand I trail
Within the shadow of the sail ;
A joy intense,
The cooling sense
Glides down my drowsy indolence.

With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Where Summer sings and never dies,—
O'ervelled with vines,
She glows and shines
Among her future oil and wines.

Her children, hid
The cliffs amid,
Are gambolling with the gambolling kid ;
Or down the walls,
With tipsy calls,
Laugh on the rocks like waterfalls.

The fisher's child,
With tresses wild,
Unto the smooth, bright sand beguiled,
With glowing lips
Sings as she skips,
Or gazes at the far-off ships.

Yon deep bark goes
Where Traffic blows,
From lands of sun to lands of snows ;—
This happier one,
Its course is run
From lands of snow to lands of sun.

O happy ship,
To rise and dip,
With the blue crystal at your lip !
O happy crew,
My heart with you
Sails, and sails, and sings anew !

No more, no more
The worldly shore
Upbraids me with its loud uproar !
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise !

XV

To this generation he is best known as the author of "Sheridan's Ride". He had already written "The Wagoner of the Alle-

ghanies", a poem of the revolution, for James E. Murdoch, the elocutionist, to recite, and he wrote six other poems suggested by events in the war of the rebellion; but the historical opportunity afforded by "Sheridan's Ride" was an especially happy one, and his poem met with instant acceptance. The facts are in substantial accord with the poem.

The Shenandoah valley had been the path for several invasions into Maryland and Virginia, and on Aug. 7, 1864, General Grant put General Sheridan into command of the army there stationed, with directions to drive back the Confederate forces and make further invasion impossible. At first, his success did not seem to be very marked, but after advancing and retreating he had finally entrenched his forces on the left bank of Cedar Creek near Strasburg, 20 miles from Winchester, and there he left them in what seemed to be impregnable security while he went to Washington to consult with General Grant. The Confederate General Early, who was opposed to him, had received reinforcements; and making the most difficult

and audacious nocturnal flank movement of the war, by a sudden attack in the early morning of Oct. 19 he put the entire Union army into panic and sent them flying down the road toward Winchester.

Sheridan had slept at Winchester on his way back to the army, and had heard the early morning firing but supposed it was only a reconnaissance. He started out in the morning for a leisurely ride toward his forces, but four or five miles out of Winchester began to meet the flying troops and learned of the disaster that had befallen them. He halted the fugitives, and as he met others swung his hat at them, shouting "Face the other way boys! We will lick them out of their boots!"

At 10 o'clock he reached the main army, which had made a stand just south of Newtown. There was a pause in the fight which gave him opportunity to re-form his troops and by his personal influence to infuse them with enthusiasm. At one o'clock the rebels attacked once more, but were repulsed. The Union army advanced, took Middletown, and produced in the Confederate forces a

greater panic than that from which they had themselves just recovered. They recaptured all their own artillery with as many more guns from the enemy, and bivouacked that night on their old camp-ground. It was practically the destruction of Early's army, and produced assured security in the North from further invasions by way of the Shenandoah.

XVI

SHERIDAN'S RIDE

Up from the South at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war,
Thundered along the horizon's bar ;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold,
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good broad highway leading down ;
And there, through the flush of the morning light,

A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight,
As if he knew the terrible need ;
He stretched away with his utmost speed ;
Hills rose and fell, but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering
South

The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth ;
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.

The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls ;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind

Like an ocean flying before the wind,
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eye full of fire.
But lo ! he is nearing his heart's desire ;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops.
What was done ? what to do ? a glance told him
both ;
Then striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,

He dashed down the line, 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there,
because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was
gray ;
By the flash of his eye, and the red nostril's play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say,
" I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester, down to save the day ! "
Hurrah ! hurrah for Sheridan !
Hurrah ! hurrah for horse and man !
And when their statues are placed on high,
Under the dome of the Union sky,
The American soldier's Temple of Fame ;
There with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright :
" Here is the steed that saved the day,
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester, twenty miles away ! "

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¹ Thomas Buchanan Read, *National Magazine*, April, 1885.

² Thomas Buchanan Read, by R. H. Stoddard, *Lippincott's Magazine*, Feb., 1891.

³ The Poetical Works of Thomas Buchanan Read. Complete in Three Volumes. Philadelphia, 1874.



Washington Irving

APRIL 3

WASHINGTON IRVING

I

Washington Irving was born in New York, April 3, 1783, the youngest of eleven children. At 16 he was placed in a lawyer's office, but he was of delicate health, and in 1804 his brother sent him to France upon a sailing vessel. He returned two years later, and became something of a dandy in fashionable society. During the war of 1812 he was made colonel as aide upon the staff of Governor Tompkins. When peace was declared he sailed for Liverpool to join his brother Peter in managing the English branch of the business upon which the fortunes of his family depended. In 1818 the house became bankrupt, and he was obliged to turn to writing for a living. He per-



Washington Irving

This portrait is from "Masterpieces of American Literature", and used by permission of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers.

suaded the English publisher Murray to issue his "Sketch Book", and soon found himself famous and prosperous. He received from Murray \$2,000 for the "Sketch Book", \$5,000 for "Bracebridge Hall", \$15,000 for "Columbus", and \$10,000 for "Conquest of Granada". In 1824 he went to Madrid, where he wrote four of his books of Spanish history. In 1832 he returned to the United States, and was welcomed with acclamation. From 1842-1846 he was ambassador to Spain, after which he returned to America, and died on Nov. 28, 1859. He never married.

II

His gift of authorship showed itself at an early age. When 19 he wrote letters signed "Jonathan Oldstyle" for the *Morning Chronicle*, which one of his brothers published. At 23 he joined another elder brother and James Kirk Paulding in issuing *Salmagundi*, a periodical, the first number of which appeared in Jan. 1807. At 26 he published his "Knickerbocker's History of New York". At first this was not intended for a serious literary work, but for a satire upon a history of the city just published. Although the

Encyclopædia Britannica considers this "History of New York" the most genuinely national of all Irving's works in its quaintness and drollery, and manifesting his most original power, it was "The Sketch Book", published in parts in 1819, that first made Irving recognized as a literary power, and it is by the tales of this book that he is best known to the general reading public.

III

Other books of the same general character as the Sketch Book were "Bracebridge Hall" (1822), with stories English in subject, and "Tales of a Traveller" (1824). But most of his subsequent work was historical. His Spanish group included the "Life of Columbus", "Companions of Columbus", "Conquest of Granada", "The Alhambra", and "Lives of Mahomet and his Successors". His American group contained besides his "Life of Washington", his "Astoria", a history of the great merchant's fur-trading settlement in Oregon, and "Captain Bonneville", the memoirs of a veteran hunter. His "Life of Goldsmith" was a sympathetic

memoir of an author with whose style he had much in common.

IV

Of his books the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says (xiii. 373) :

He has far more of the poet than any of the writers of the 18th century, and his moralizing, unlike theirs, is unconscious and indirect. The same poetical feeling is shown in his biographies; his subject is invariably chosen for its picturesqueness, and whatever is unessential to portraiture is thrown into the background. The result is that his biographies however deficient in research, bear the stamp of genuine artistic intelligence, equally remote from compilation and disquisition: In execution they are almost faultless; the narrative is easy, the style pellucid, and the writer's judgment nearly always in accordance with the general verdict of history. They will not, therefore, be easily superseded, and indeed Irving's productions are in general impressed with that signet of classical finish which guarantees the permanency of literary work more surely than direct utility or even intellectual power.

V

Julian Hawthorne says of him :

Irving possessed the rare and valuable endowment of a thoroughly healthy nature; nothing bitter, morbid, or sensational ever came from him. He

was a spontaneous optimist ; he declined to look upon the gloomy and sinister side of life. His intellectual ship was not a vessel of deep draft ; but her lines were graceful, her sails white, her movement lightsome and she sailed on summer seas ; the hand upon her helm ever steered her towards the Happy Isles. His success as a writer surprised and almost intimidated him ; he could not believe that his work was so excellent as the public declared it to be. This, no doubt, was because the work was the genuine and unforced product of his temperament, which was normally literary ; he could not gauge a quality so intimate to himself. Humor ranging from playful to broad was a prominent feature of his writings ; and allied with it was a sincere and refined vein of pathos. His observation was accurate and graphic, his perception of character picturesque and sympathetic, his judgment sane and serene. His mind was creative, though not on a profound scale ; he was wanting in the constructive faculty ; and there were regions of human nature which he made no attempt to explore. But in his own gentle and charming sphere he was altogether admirable.

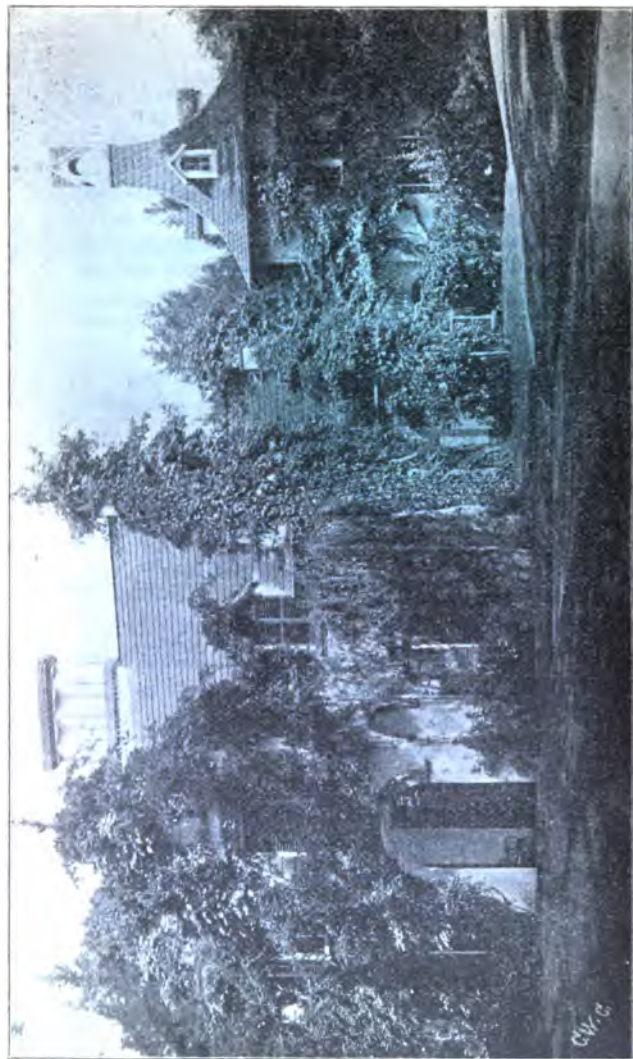
VI

Lowell's estimate in his "Fable for Critics" is all that Irving's friends could desire. To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele, Throw in *all* of Addison, *minus* the chill, With the whole of that partnership's stock and good will,

Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain,
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm, lazy sun loitering down through
green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserv-
ing
A name either English or Yankee—just Irving.

VII

New York owes him especial recognition and gratitude in that he was the first to clothe the beautiful region of the lower Hudson with a mantle of legend. His residence, "Sunnyside", on the site of Katrina Van Tassel's home, two or three miles south of Tarrytown, is a shrine of literary pilgrims; and the old Dutch church so familiar to readers of "The Sketch Book" is still in good preservation though erected in 1699. We reproduce as the best example of Irving's work his "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" entire, with the illustrations by Felix O. C. Darley, published by The American Art Union in 1849.



SUNNYSIDE



KATRINA VAN TASSEL'S HOME



THE OLD MILL



THE OLD DUTCH CHURCH



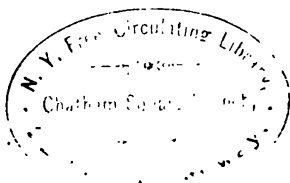
RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH
KNICKERBOCKER

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre..... —CARTWRIGHT.

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the

(97)



weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky ; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace !), and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth,

was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man: he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a certain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A ter-magant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles ; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted in their sports, made



their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches and Indians. Whenever

he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity ; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance ; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences : the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready

to attend to anybody's business but his own ; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm ; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country ; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces ; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages ; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than any where else ; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some outdoor work to do ; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off

galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning ~~in~~ his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods; but what courage can withstand the ever-enduring and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail dropped to the ground or curled



between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle ; and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle, as years of matrimony rolled on : a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village ; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as

drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.



The opinions of this junta were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently

to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree ; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs ; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds ; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this strong-hold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage, and call the members all to naught ; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair ; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it ; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee !" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From

an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow

winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a grave apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be some one of the neighborhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches,

the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied, with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving each other, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole

time, Rip and his companion had labored on in silence ; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion : some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts ; and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar : one had a large head, broad face, and small piggish eyes ; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenances ; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt

and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlor of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and

made signs to him to wait upon the com-



pany. He obeyed with fear and trembling ; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another ; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at

length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain-breeze. “Surely,” thought Rip, “I have not slept here all night.” He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woebegone party at nine-pins—the flagon—“Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!” thought Rip: “what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle!”

He looked around for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrustated with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and,

having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain ; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen : he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening ; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel,

and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape-vines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre ; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog ; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice ; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look high down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done ? The morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun ; he dreaded to meet his wife ; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty

firelock, and with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew ; which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long !

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered ; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disap-

peared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—every thing was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains; there ran the silver Hudson at a distance; there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been. Rip was sorely perplexed—"That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"



It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name; but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed; “My very dog,” sighed poor Rip, “has forgotten me!”

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears: he called loudly for his wife and children; the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn; but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended

with old hats and petticoats ; and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap ; and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes. All this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe ; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder,

with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted". Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear "whether he was Federal or Democrat". Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question;

when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded, in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village." "Alas ! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him !"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders : "A tory ! a tory ! a spy ! a refugee ! hustle him ! away with him !" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order ; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, "what he came there for, and whom he was seeking." The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely

came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

“Well—who are they? Name them.”

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, “Where’s Nicholas Vedder?”

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin piping voice: “Nicholas Vedder!—why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the church-yard that used to tell about him, but that’s rotten and gone too.”

“Where’s Brom Dutcher?”

“Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war. Some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point; others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony’s Nose. I don’t know—he never came back again.”

“Where’s Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?”

“He went off to the wars, too—was a great militia general, and is now in congress.”

Rip’s heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world.

Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand,—war—congress—Stony Point. He had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, “Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?”

“Oh, Rip Van Winkle!” exclaimed two or three; “oh, to be sure! that’s Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree.”

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded “who he was, and what was his name.”

“God knows!” exclaimed he, at his wit’s end; “I’m not myself—I’m somebody else—that’s me yonder—no—that’s somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they’ve changed my gun, and every thing’s changed, and I’m changed, and I can’t tell what’s my name, or who I am!”



The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief; at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman pressed through the throng, to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to

cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool! the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child—the air of the mother—the tone of her voice—all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man! Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood vessel in a fit of passion at a New England pedler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms.

"I am your father!" cried he; "young

Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed: "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor! Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him as but one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks: and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head, upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name,

who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings—that it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon ; being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river, and the great city called by his name—that his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain—and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter

took him home to live with her : she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm ; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to any thing else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits. He soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worst for the wear and tear of time ; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn-door, and was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war". It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his

torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I

have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood, but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally give it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins ; and it is a common wish of all hen-pecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE

The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart*, and the Kypphauser mountain : the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the Tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity :

“The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settle-

ments to have been very subject to marvellous events and appearances. Indeed I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson ; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain ; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice, and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of a doubt. D. K."

Walt Whitman

MAY 31

WALT WHITMAN

The four authors thus far spoken of have been familiar to all readers of current literature. Poe, Longfellow, and Irving are known to every one who has looked over a school reader, and Read's "Sheridan's Ride" has been recited in every schoolhouse in the union. But probably to most of our subscribers Walt Whitman is only a name; very likely few could recite a single poem of his, or even give the title of one. Most of them associate his name with something which he supposed to be poems and called "Leaves of Grass"; if they have learned to characterize them at all it is to quote his own description of his poetry as a "barbaric yawp", and if they remember any verse it is "I loafe and invite my soul". If this article gives to such readers some realizing idea of

the place which Walt Whitman really occupies in the literary horizon it will be worth to them the price of the volume.

I

Walt Whitman is a poet of whom one cannot afford to be ignorant. John Burroughs looks upon him as the one mountain thus far in our literary landscape⁴.

Emerson declared that "Leaves of Grass" was the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America had yet contributed¹.

Thoreau thought the "Leaves" worth all the clergyman in the country for preaching⁵.

Stedman, who is by no means a blind worshiper of his, says of our living poets he thinks him the most sure of an intermittent remembrance hereafter, if not of a general reading, and adds :

Both instinct and judgment, with our Greek choruses in mind, and Pindar, and the Hebrew bards, long since led me to number him among the foremost lyric and idyllic poets⁶.

Richard Watson Gilder says :

Place Walt Whitman's poetry in the corner-stone of this nation, let some evolution of nature overthrow these United States, and then let that poetry

be found, and from the lines will rise up a picture of our times such I believe as can nowhere else be found.

II

Stedman also points out that Poe was one of the first to lead a rebellion against formalism, commonplace, and the spirit of the bourgeois, and says:



EDGAR ALLAN POE, 1809-49

In this movement Whitman is his countertype at the pole opposite from that of art; and hence they

justly are picked out from the rest of us and associated in foreign minds⁶.

Symonds said "Leaves of Grass" made a man of him; Stevenson said it dispelled a thousand illusions; Mrs. Gilchrist said it enabled her to find her own soul⁵. Edward Dowden wrote to him in 1871:

We none of us question that yours is the clearest and sweetest and fullest American voice⁴.

William Morris said:

I look upon him as one of the men * * * without

whom poetry would degenerate into a mere literary trick, insincere and empty, valueless to all who set a true value on human life¹.

William Rossetti, who edited an English edition of his poems, said¹ :

I consider him to be pre-eminent among the sons of men for a large human nature,—broad, deep, and full,—and for the power of giving the deepest and most universal expression to the deepest and most universal feelings¹.

Robert Buchanan called him the wisest and noblest, the most truly great, of all modern literary men, and said :

I hope yet if I am spared to look upon him again, for well I know that the earth holds no such another nature. Nor do I write this with the wild hero-worship of a boy, but as the calm, deliberate judgment of a man who is far beyond all literary predilections or passions. In Walt Whitman I see more than a mere maker of poems. I see a personality worthy of rank even above that of Socrates, akin, even, though lower and far distant, to that of Him who is considered, and rightly, the best of men. * * * We have other poets, but we have no other divine poet⁴.

III

Criticism of his poems has even developed a new nomenclature.

William Rossetti says that his language has a certain ultimate quality. Another critic speaks of his absolute use of language. Col. Ingersoll credits him with more supreme words than have been uttered by any other man of our time⁵. The London *Times* spoke of his "heroic nudity".⁴

Burroughs calls his method egocentric, and says one of the key-words to Whitman both as a man and a poet is the word "composite", and says he was probably the most composite man this century has produced, and in this respect at least is representative of the American of the future.

"He is fluid, generative, electric; he is full of the germs, potencies, and latencies of things; he provokes thought without satisfying it; he is formless without being void; he is both Darwinian and Dantesque. He is the great reconciler, he united and harmonized so many opposites in himself. As a man he united the masculine and feminine elements in a remarkable degree; he united the innocent vanity of the child with the self-reliance of a god. I believe he supplies in fuller measure that pristine element, something akin to the unbreathed air of

mountain and shore which makes the arterial blood of poetry and literature, than any other modern writer⁵ ”.

“The word I myself put primarily for the description of them as they stand at last,” says Walt Whitman himself of his poems, “is the word Suggestiveness.”⁶

IV

The late Prof. Clifford was the first to use the term cosmic emotion in connection with “Leaves of Grass”⁶.

Dr. Bucke ascribes to Walt Whitman a sixth sense, cosmic consciousness, and traces the evolution from unconsciousness through simple consciousness and self-consciousness. It comes suddenly upon a person as a clear conception, in outline, of the drift of the universe—a consciousness that the over-ruling power which resides in it is infinitely beneficent: a vision of the WHOLE, or at least, of an immense WHOLE, which dwarfs all conception, imagination, or speculation springing from and belonging to ordinary self-consciousness, making the old attempts to mentally grasp the universe and its meaning petty and even ridiculous⁴.

Dr. Bucke goes into detail, saying that there have been at least 18 persons endowed with this cosmic consciousness, including Buddha, Paul, Mohammed, Dante, Las Casas, and Balzac. In the last, he says, as in the case of Walt Whitman, writings of absolutely no value were immediately followed by pages across each of which in letters of ethereal fire are written the words "ETERNAL LIFE"; pages covered not only by a masterpiece, but by such vital sentences as have not been written ten times in the history of the race⁴.

V

Walt Whitman was born May 31, 1819, on a farm in West Hills, on Long Island. The family moved not long after to Brooklyn, where he went to the public schools for a time. He learned the printer's trade and worked at it. He also lived in the country on Long Island, from sixteen to eighteen years of age taught school; he worked on the farm, and published a weekly newspaper. In 1848 he went down the Mississippi to New Orleans, and worked there as editor. Returning to Brooklyn he spent his time in

literary and other work, following for a while his father's trade of house-building, until in 1862, he went to Washington as a volunteer nurse in the hospital camps, distributing money which was sent to him by friends at the North. He was afterwards appointed to a place in one of the departments, but discharged by Secretary Harlan on account of the alleged immorality of his "Leaves of Grass". He got an appointment in the attorney-general's department where he remained for eight years.

While in Washington from 1864 to 1870 he suffered from several partial paralytic attacks, the influence of which he succeeded in temporarily throwing off, but in 1873 he broke down, and for the rest of his life he lived in Camden, N. J., physically a wreck, in poverty, almost in squalor^s, till he died March 26, 1892.

VI

His literary work began early. He learned to set type at thirteen, and wrote for the newspapers. Before he was 20 he was editor and publisher of the *Long Islander*, a newspaper which has survived, for it is to-day

a weekly journal of prosperous circulation. After that for some 12 years he resided in New York, and in his own words "worked as printer and writer, (with an occasional shy at 'poetry')". In 1847-8 he edited the *Brooklyn Eagle*, and in 1849-50 the New Orleans *Crescent*. In 1851-2 he edited the *Brooklyn Freeman*. But all this work was thoroughly commonplace. The reprinted sketches from his *Eagle*, and another entitled "The Last of the Sacred Army", resuscitated by the *New York World*, show no ability in any way remarkable.

His story of "Death in the School-Room", which he marks "a fact", published in the *Democratic Review* for August, 1841, is perhaps as often referred to as any of his early stories; but it is a lugubrious tale, which we certainly should not publish if it was sent to us by anybody now, and which we hardly feel like reproducing even to illustrate his early style.

VII

In his "Specimen Days", which is made up largely of memoranda scribbled at all

times and in all places, on his theory that whatever thoughts he had were to be jotted down at once and preserved, there is much that reminds one of his poetry. Indeed, there are passages that are almost as poetical as anything in what he has arranged in verses. His memoranda of the war, made up largely from letters written to the *New York Times*, have much freshness of contemporary and sympathetic description.

Of his "Democratic Vistas" Rudolf Schmidt says that it leaves the strongest impression of an elevated and cultivated mind glancing with penetration upon all the events of its time and people, and that it is of its kind the most pregnant thing that has ever been written, uniting the fire of the poet and the lucidity of the thinker with the marvellous foresight of the seer⁴.

This is not, however, the usual judgment; if he had written only prose his name would soon have been forgotten.

VIII

But in 1854 he began writing "Leaves of Grass", and the next year the first edition appeared, printed in Brooklyn from type set

up in part by himself. This leap into literature brought him at a bound to the highest pitch he ever attained, and it is by these first poems mainly that he is known and judged.

Burroughs remarks :

The student of Whitman's life and works will be early struck by three things,—his sudden burst into song, the maturity of his work from the first, and his self-knowledge and self-estimate. The fit of inspiration came upon him suddenly; it was like the flowering of the orchards in spring; there was little or no hint of it till almost the very hour of the event⁸.

IX

The most remarkable thing about the book is that it is a revelation of his personality. He says himself :

This is no book,

Who touches this touches a man.

He seeks to portray himself in all his physical, mental, moral, and immoral attributes.

See me, he says, the average man of the nineteenth century, just as I am, with all the conventions and lies and shams stripped off, leaving my intellectual and emotional processes absolutely naked to view¹⁰.

He said himself at a round table held in his honor :

As I have said, back of everything that is very grand, and very erudite, and very scientific, and very everything that is splendid in our era, is the simple individual critter, personality, if you please—his emotionality, supreme emotionality. Through that personality I have myself spoken, reiterated. That is behind "*Leaves of Grass*". It is the utterance of personality after—carefully remember—*after* being all surcharged with those other elements⁴.

X

Since "*Leaves of Grass*" is a photograph of his personality, the character of Walt Whitman becomes even more important in the criticism of his works than in the case of other poets . The more his life is studied the more he will seem to deserve O'Connor's name of "the good, gray poet". He was in the first place wonderfully sympathetic and kind-hearted, especially among laborers.

He was fond of riding up and down the omnibuses on Broadway, and he says :

I suppose the critics will laugh heartily, but the influence of those Broadway omnibus jaunts and drivers and declamations and escapades undoubtedly entered into the gestation of "*Leaves of Grass*"⁵.

In the latter part of 1850 he was a frequent visitor at the New York hospital, looking after and ministering to a disabled stage-driver's family, and his four years of service in the hospitals of Washington during the war only developed a readiness to minister to others which was native. Speaking of the passing of a regiment of Confederate prisoners he says :

As I stood quite close to them, several good-looking enough youths (but O what a tale of misery their appearance told), nodded or just spoke to me, without doubt divining pity and fatherliness out of my face, for my heart was full enough of it³.

This sympathy for the individual man developed into a sympathy for humanity, and especially for sinners.

Traubel quotes him as saying in his old age,

If I were to write my "Leaves" over again I should put in more toleration, and even receptivity for those we call bad, and the criminal⁴.

XI

The best test of his philosophy was that he believed in it and lived it. At the time when paralysis compelled him to give up his clerkship in Washington, when he began to suffer

for the necessities of life, when friends were few, when his poems seemed to have been condemned, he wrote the following prayer, putting it into the mouth of Columbus wrecked on the Antillean island, but manifestly uttering his own feelings.

XII

PRAYER OF COLUMBUS

Thou knowest my manhood's solemn and visionary meditations.

O, I am sure they really came from Thee,
The urge, the ardor, the unconquerable will,
The potent, felt, interior command, stronger than words,

A message from the Heavens whispering to me even in sleep,
These sped me on.

One effort more, my altar this bleak sand ;
That Thou, O God, my life hast lighted,
With ray of light, steady, ineffable, vouchsafed of Thee,

Light rare, untellable, lighting the very light,
Beyond all signs, descriptions, languages ;
For that, O God, be it my latest word, here on my knees,

Old, poor, and paralyzed, I thank Thee.

My hands, my limbs grow nerveless,
My brain feels rack'd, bewilder'd,

Let the old timbers part, I will not part,
I will cling fast to Thee, O God, though the waves
buffet me,
Thee, Thee at least I know.

XIII

Whitman, above all others, is the poet of immortality. He believed in the immortality of identity—that our lives do not end here, that death is an essential—ay, as he urges, even to be sung to, praised. Calm, exalted, he awaited death, and that was perhaps the supreme index of his character⁴.

These lines of his own upon death were spoken at his funeral.

XIV

A SONG OF PRAISE TO DEATH

Come, lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
ing,

In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later, delicate death.

Praised be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge
curious,

And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother, always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest
welcome ?

Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed
come, come unfalteringly.

Approach, strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously
sing the dead,

Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments
and feastings for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-
spread sky are fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thought-
ful night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave
whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee, O vast and well-vell'd
death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad
fields and the prairies, wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming
wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee, O death.

XV

He never married. In fact, he seems never to have conceived of the love of man for a single woman. He criticises Shakapeare because the love he deals with is the old stock love of playwrights and romancers. He says :

It is possessed of the same unnatural and shocking passion for some girl or woman, that wrenches it from its manhood, emasculated and impotent, without strength to hold the rest of the objects and goods of life in their proper positions. It seeks nature for sickly uses. It goes screaming and weeping after the facts of the universe, in their calm beauty and equanimity, to note the occurrence of itself, and to sound the news, in connection with the charms of the neck, hair, or complexion of a particular female⁴.

This reminds one of Artemus Ward's account of the theatre in Salt Lake city, where "Romeo and Juliet" was produced and fell flat. Everybody agreed that it was ridiculous to make such a fuss as that about a single woman. Artemus Ward says that the next night the play was produced with forty Juliets in the cast and proved a great success. Walt Whitman knows something of women, but nothing of woman.

XVI

On the other hand, the sort of affection which the usual man feels for some woman is to him an affection for some man. His "Calamus", reminding one of the sonnets of Shakspeare, shows toward a certain young man the exclusive affection and the jealousy of the lover. He is not satisfied in Anglo-Saxon fashion to manifest his affection for another man at the most by a hearty handshake, but he must throw his arms about his neck and kiss him, or sit with his hand on his knee.

In his memoranda of the war he says of various soldiers in the hospital :

I loved him much ; always kissed him, and he did me.

The kiss I gave him as I was about leaving he returned four-fold.

Evidently very intelligent and well-bred—very affectionate—held on to my hand and put it by his face, not willing to let me leave.

I was in the habit of going in afternoons and sitting by him and soothing him, and he liked to have me—liked to put his hand out and put it on my knee—would keep it so a long while.

Burroughs, always an advocate, says :

The cosmic takes the place of the idyllic ; the begger, the Adamic man, take the place of the lover ; patriotism takes the place of family affection ; charity takes the place of piety ; love of kind is more than love of neighbor⁵.

But we can never believe that the man is entire who has not known the love of woman.

Indeed, we are relieved to learn from his note book¹²:

My life has not been occupied and drawn out by love for comrades, for I have not found them. Therefore I have put my passionate love of comrades in my poems.

XVII

Yet by one of the contradictions in which he abounds, perhaps the most beautiful idyl in the language that deals with the longing of parted lovers, is his interpretation of the song of the hermit thrush, in his "A Word out of the Sea".

Of this Standish O'Grady says :

There is a very luxury of melancholy in his "Word out of Sea", and the lone singer on the shore of Paumanok, wonderful, causing tears. Strange, unapprehended influences pour themselves into the words of that great poem, which have never before found expression ; melancholy as of one surfeited with joy, to whom sorrow is now a deeper joy, woe with the heart of delight, flickering

shadows that seems to live and hover beckoning over the scene, voices as from another world, blank desolation which we desire to be no other than it is, suffering and despair, though somehow it seems better that they should be; a poem whose meaning cannot be fathomed, whose beauty cannot be fully tasted—a mystic, unfathomable song⁴.

XVIII

REMINISCENCE

1. Once, Paumanok,
 When the snows had melted, and the Fifth Month
 grass was growing,
 Up this sea-shore, in some briers,
 Two guests from Alabama—two together,
 And their nest, and four light-green eggs, spotted
 with brown,
 And every day the he-bird, to and fro, near at
 hand,
 And every day the she-bird, crouched on her nest,
 silent, with bright eyes,
 And every day I, a curious boy, never too close,
 never disturbing them,
 Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.
2. *Shine! Shine!*
Pour down your warmth, great Sun!
While we bask—we two together.
3. *Two together!*
Winds blow South, or winds blow North,
Day come white, or night come black,

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*Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
If we two but keep together.*

4. Till of a sudden,
May be killed, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouched not on the
nest,
Nor returned that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appeared again.
5. And thenceforward, all summer, in the sound of
the sea,
And at night, under the full of the moon, in
calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals, the remaining one, the
he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.
6. *Blow! Blow!*
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait, till you blow my mate to me.
7. Yes, when the stars glistened,
All night long, on the prong of a moss-scallop'd
stake,
Down, almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer, wonderful, causing tears.
8. He called on his mate,
He poured forth the meanings which I, of all
men, know.

9. Yes, my brother, I know,
The rest might not—but I have treasured every
note,
For once, and more than once, dimly, down to
the beach gliding.
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending my-
self with the shadows,
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes,
the sounds and sights after their sorts,
The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly
tossing,
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my
hair,
Listened long and long.
10. Listened, to keep, to sing—now translating the
notes,
Following you, my brother.
11. *Soothe! Soothe!*
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind, embracing and lap-
ping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me.
12. *Low hangs the moon—it rose late,*
O it is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love.
18. *O madly the sea pushes upon the land,*
With love—with love.
14. *O night!*
O do I not see my love fluttering out there among
the breakers?

The Song of the Hermit Thrush 159

*What is that little black thing I see there in the
white?*

15. *Loud! Loud!*

*Loud I call to you my love!
High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here,
You must know who I am, my love.*

16. *Low-hanging moon!*

*What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape of my mate!
O moon, do not keep her from me any longer.*

17. *Land! O land!*

*Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give
me my mate back again, if you would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way
I look.*

18. *O rising stars!*

*Perhaps the one I want so much will rise with some
of you.*

19. *O throat!*

*Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I
want.*

20. *Shake out, carols!*

*Solitary here—the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! Death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O, under that moon, where she droops almost down
into the sea!
O reckless, despairing carols.*

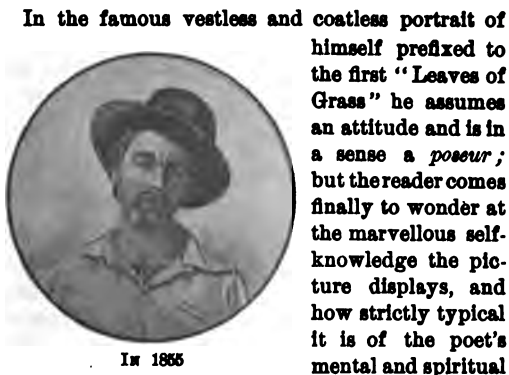
21. *But soft !
Sink low—soft !
Soft ! Let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment, you husky-noised sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint—I must be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.*
22. *Hither, my love !
Here I am ! Here !
With this just-sustained note I announce myself to you.
This gentle call is for you, my love.*
23. *Do not be decoyed elsewhere !
That is the whistle of the wind—it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.*
24. *O darkness ! O in vain !
O I am very sick and sorrowful.*
25. *O brown halo in the sky, near the moon, drooping upon the sea !
O troubled reflection in the sea !
O throat ! O throbbing heart !
O all—and I singing uselessly all the night.*
26. *Murmur ! Murmur on !
O murmurs—you yourselves make me continue to sing, I know not why.*

27. *O past! O joy!*
In the air—in the woods—over fields,
Loved! Loved! Loved! Loved! Loved!
Loved—but no more with me,
We two together no more.

XIX

His appearance was always striking. President Lincoln exclaimed as he saw him approach, "Well he looks like a man!"⁴

Burroughs says :



In the famous vestless and coatless portrait of himself prefixed to the first "Leaves of Grass" he assumes an attitude and is in a sense a *poseur*; but the reader comes finally to wonder at the marvellous self-knowledge the picture displays, and how strictly typical it is of the poet's mental and spiritual attitude toward the world,—independent, unconventional, audacious, yet inquiring and sympathetic in a wonderful degree.

This portrait is symbolical of the whole attitude of the poet toward his task. It was a hint that we must take this poet with very little literary tailoring; it was a hint that he belonged to the open air, and came of the people and spoke in their spirit⁴.

Stedman points it out as revealing not a man too proud to care from whence he came, but one very proud of whence he came and what he wore⁵. It was part of his creed that to be uncouth was distinctly and desirably American.

XX

To the edition of 1860 another portrait was prefixed. But Burroughs, who was his intimate friend and admirer, says :



IN 1860

age or country has seen⁵.

The full beauty of his face and head did not appear till he was past sixty. After that, I have little doubt, it was the finest head this

He was always picturesque in his attire.



IN 1880

In 1850, a house surgeon in the New York hospital says :

He was always dressed in a blue flannel coat and vest, with gray and baggy trousers. He wore a woolen shirt, with a Byronic collar, low in the neck,

without a cravat, as I remember, and a large felt hat. His hair was iron gray, and he had a full beard and mustache of the same color. His face and neck were bronzed by exposure to the sun and air⁵.

XXI

On the other hand, he was so scrupulously neat in his appearance as to produce on all he met a distinct impression of cleanliness, and Burroughs says of him :

With all his rank masculinity, there was a curious feminine undertone in him which revealed itself in the quality of his voice, the delicate texture of his skin, the gentleness of his touch and ways, the attraction he had for children and the common people.

The impression you got from him was not that of

a learned or a literary person, but of fresh, strong, sympathetic human nature,—such an impression, I fancy, only fuller, as one might have got from Walter Scott⁵.

It is curious to note in this connection that the one book he loved most was Scott's "*Tales of Border Minstrelsy*"⁶.

XXII

His style has proved to most readers a stumbling-block. His versification proceeds in the loosest possible fashion, discarding rhyme altogether except in rare instances. A vague effect of rhythm is preserved, the caesura recurring at irregular and often widely unequal intervals. It is an informal but roughly harmonious flow of words, sustaining the same relation to finished verse as the recitative to the aria. It is regarded by many as a startling innovation, but is really nothing more than a return to the earliest and most nearly spontaneous form of poetic expression¹⁰, as shown in the Psalms, in Osian, and in William Blake.

Burroughs, whose persistence in praise becomes wearisome, tries to prove first that his verses are poetry ; second, that he could have

made them so if he had chosen ; and third, that they are a good deal better than as if they were : which reminds one of the pettifogger's announcement to the court that he would prove in behalf of his client, first, that the kettle was cracked when he borrowed it ; second, that it was whole when he returned it ; and third, that he never had the old kettle anyhow.

XXIII

Certainly at first sight the verse is rugged and crude. There are sentences pages long, with dashes and parentheses, and catalogues as statistical as Homer's list of the ships. It is only when one has read considerable of it, and especially when one has read it aloud, that one begins to recognize what true ear for music Whitman had. In his use of words he is bound by no rules. He forces common words to new uses, as for instance :

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,
And filter and *fiber* your blood.

He makes unusual compounds, and introduces his small stock of French, and Spanish, and Latin, on all occasions. For instance one of his poems begins :

O mater ! O fils !

and a half-page down, he cries :

O libertad !

XXIV

Karl Knortz, the German critic, says :

Everyone who so far has ventured on the reading of "Leaves of Grass" has had the following experiences : After the perusal of the first few pages it has seemed to him that the book must have been the work of a madman. Soon, however, he has been suddenly arrested by an original thought which has revealed to him the meaning of what he had so far read, and has irresistibly urged him to read further. He has found himself, then, in the condition of the magician's pupil in Goethe's ballad, who is unable to free himself from the spirits which he has called up. Whitman is himself well aware of this peculiar magic, for he says frankly and openly :

I teach straying from me, yet who can stray
from me ?

I follow you whoever you are from the present hour,

My words itch at your ears till you understand them '.

XXV

Again he says :

Listen ! I will be honest with you,

I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough
new prizes.

I tramp a perpetual journey,
My signs are a rain-proof coat, good shoes, and a
 staff cut from the woods,
No friend of mine takes his ease in my chair,
I have no chair, no church, no philosophy,
 lead no man to a dinner table, library, or exchange,
But each man and each woman of you I lead upon a
 knoll,
My left hand hooking you round the waist,
My right hand pointing to landscapes of continents
 and a plain public road.

XXVI

It will not do to assume that he was careless about his use of English. On the other hand there is ample proof that he studied every word. Burroughs says that he pressed the language for years for some word or phrase that would express the sense of the evening call of the robin, and died without the sight⁵. His song of the hermit thrush, already quoted, is exquisitely musical. He had even unusual regard for the typographical appearance of his poems. He liked a handsome page, and rather than have a chapter close at the end of the page he cut off a paragraph from "A Backward Glance"⁴.

He quotes from his note-book a list of

titles which he had proposed for his "Specimen Days", among which are :

As the wild bee hums in May,
Embers of Ending Days.
Sands on the Shores of 64,
As Voices in the Dusk, from Speakers far or hid,
Only Mulleins and Bumble-Bees,
Flanges of Fifty Years.

showing that far from disdaining the musical effect of words he dwelt upon it³.

What a line is the last of the following verses from "Reconciliation" :

Word over all, beautiful as the sky !
Beautiful that war. and all its deeds of carnage, must
be utterly lost !
That the hands of the sisters Death and Night incessantly wash again, and ever again, this soil'd world.

XXVII

Mr. Gosse finds Whitman only a potential poet, and says :

His work is literature in the condition of protoplasm. He is a maker of poems in solution ; the structural change which should have crystallized his fluid and teeming pages into forms of art never came⁴.

Rudolf Schmidt said, more acutely, that his style resembled a stream of noble molten metals⁴; Joel Chandler Harris calls his verse:

Not the poetry that culture stands in expectation of, nor the capers in verse and metre, but those rarer intimations and suggestions that are born in primeval solitudes, or come whirling from the vast funnel of the storm⁵.

He says of his own writing that his rhythm and uniformity he will conceal in the roots of his verses, not to be seen of themselves, but to break forth loosely as lilacs on a bush, and take shapes compact, as the shapes of melons, or chestnuts, or pears⁴.

XXVIII

Burroughs well says :

Whitman was not a builder. If he had the architectural power which the great poets have shown, he gave little proof of it. It was not required by the task he set before himself. His book is not a temple : it is a wood, a field, a highway ; vista, vista, everywhere,—vanishing lights and shades, truths half disclosed, successions of objects, hints, suggestions, brief pictures, groups, voices, contrasts, blendings, and, above all, the tonic quality of the open air. The shorter poems are like herbs or leaves, or a handful of sprays gathered in a walk ; never a thought carefully carved, and appealing to our sense of artistic form. * * *

Whether the music of his verse as of winds and waves, the long, irregular, dithyrambic movement, its fluid and tonic character, the vastness of concep-

tion, the large, biblical speech, the surging cosmic emotion, the vivid personal presence as of the living man looking into your eye or walking by your side,—whether all these things, the refreshing quality as of “harsh salt spray” which the poet Lanier found in the “Leaves”, the electric currents which Mrs. Gilchrist found there, the “unexcelled imaginative justice of language” which Mr. Stevenson at times found, the religious liberation and faith which Mr. Symonds found, the “incomparable things incomparably well said” of Emerson, the rifle-bullets of Ruskin, the “supreme words” of Col. Ingersoll, etc.,—whether qualities and effects like these, I say, make up to us for the absence of the traditional poetic graces and adornments, is a question which will undoubtedly long divide the reading world⁵.

XXIX

He stands perhaps in point of style at the other



extreme from Tennyson, whom he greatly admired, calling him “the boss of us all”, and with whom he had frequent correspondence. The English poet has beautified with exquisite skill the walls of a structure centuries old, while Whitman

ALFRED TENNYSON, 1809-1892

has conceived and planned and built an edifice of

his own. To use another comparison, his poems are like the original growth of the forest. They grew, they were not made. We criticise a palace or a cathedral, but how criticise a forest ?

Burroughs says again :

Whitman was afraid of what he called the beauty disease. * * *

One may pluck a flower here and there in his rugged landscape, as in any other ; but the flowers are always by the way, and never the main matter. We should not miss them if they were not there. What delights and invigorates us is in the air, and in the look of things. The flowers are like our wild blossoms growing under great trees or amid rocks, never the camellia or tuberose of the garden or hothouse,—something rude and bracing is always present, always a breath of the untamed and aboriginal².

XXX

As an assimilating poet of nature he has positive genius, and presents, says Stedman, his strongest claims. Who else, in fact, has so true a hand or eye for the details, the sweep and color of American landscape ? None so apt as he to observe the panorama of life, to see the human figure,—the haymaker, waggoner, boatman, soldier, woman and babe and maiden, and brown, lusty boy,—to hear not only “the bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of flames, clack of sticks cooking my meals”, but also “the sound I

love, the sound of the human voice”⁶.

He makes a list of the birds to be seen in Washington on the first of May, calling to mind 38 of them, and again of the flowers, of which he can recall 32 ; and he dedicates the last half of “Specimen Days” to a variety of manifestations of animal life, including

bees, pond-turtles, mulleins, cat-birds, and tulip-trees³.



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1770-1850

But he is more than an observer ; he is an interpreter, as shown in his song of the hermit-thrush. Stedman contrasts Words-

worth's exquisite lyric :

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

with Whitman's :

There was a child went forth every day ;
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he
became ;

And that object became part of him for the day, or
a certain part of the day, or for many years, or
stretching cycles of years.

* * *

The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance
of salt-marsh and shore-mud ;
These became part of that child who went forth
every day, and who now goes, and will always
go forth every day.

XXXI

But there is one point in which his poems
may justly be criticized. In his aim to re-
veal himself in his entirety he has spoken
freely of things which the world has agreed
to leave covered. There is no corruption in
his poems, but there is frequent indelicacy.

Mrs. Gilchrist says acutely :

Perhaps Walt Whitman has forgotten,—or either
some theory in his head has overridden,—the truth
that our instincts are beautiful facts of nature as
well as our bodies, and that we have a strong in-
stinct of silence about some things ⁴.

Stedman puts it admirably :

Nature, is strong and rank, but not externally so.
She, too, has her sweet and sacred sophistries, and
the delight of Art is to heighten her beguilement,
and, far from making her ranker than she is, to por-
tray what she might be in ideal combinations. Na-
ture, I say, covers her slime, her muck, her ruins,

with garments that are to us beautiful. She conceals the skeleton, the frame-work, the intestinal thick of life, and makes fair the outside of things. Her servitors swiftly hide or transform the fermenting, the excrementitious, and the higher animals possess her instinct^e.

XXXII

Speaking of the fact that Emerson some-



what cooled toward Whitman in the latter part of his life, and omitted his poems from the second edition of "Parnassus", Stedman says :

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, 1830-1882 The world, even the Concord world, is not wholly given over to prudery. It has little dread, nowadays, of the voluptuous in art, ancient or modern. But to those of Puritan stock cleanliness is even more than godliness. There is no "fair perdition" tempting us in the "Song of Myself" and the "Children of Adam". But here are things which, whether vessels of honor or dishonor, one does not care to have before him too often or too publicly, and which were unattractive to the pure and temperate seer, whose race had so long inhabit-



ed the clean-swept keeping-rooms of the land of mountain breezes and transparent streams ⁴.

Yet Burroughs says, with his usual hero-worship :

Emerson is our divine man, the precious quintessence of the New England type, invaluable for his stimulating and ennobling strain ; but his genius is too astral, too select, too remote, to incarnate and give voice to the national spirit. Clothe him with flesh and blood, make his daring affirmations real and vital in a human personality and imbued with the American spirit, and we are on the way to Whitman ⁵.

XXXIII

Whitman has another fault, a limitation. He dearly loved the word "unrefined". It was one of the words he would have us apply to himself. He was unrefined, as the air, the soil, the water, and all sweet natural things are unrefined (fine but not *refined*). He applies the word to himself two or three times in the course of his poems. He loved the words sun-tan, air-sweetness, brawn, etc. ⁶. It seemed to him breadth and cosmic sympathy to throw in his fortunes with the coarse and unrefined, even with the law-breakers. In the library or parlor he con-

fessed that he was as a gawk or one dumb, and in his journal he says in his homely way of the difficulty of comprehending Robert Ingersoll's address :

One thing is, my hearing is not to-day real good, and another thing probably is, I am rather slow anyhow⁴.

Again his devotion to America led him into extravagances. In pledging These States to work out a perfect democracy and the salvation of the world he out-vied the loudest peak-and prairie brag⁶.

So while considerable attention was paid to him by literary men, and while he remarks for instance, of William Cullen Bryant, that



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, 1794-1878

for years he used to take rambles with him miles long, on which occasions Bryant gave him clear accounts of scenes in Europe, "—the cities, the looks, architecture, art, especially Italy, where he had travelled a good deal⁸", yet on the whole in his poems, as Stedman says :

His Reverence for Abraham Lincoln 177

There is always an implication that the employer is inferior to the employed,—that the man of training, the “civilizee”, is less manly than the rough, the pioneer. He suspects those who, by chance or ability, rise above the crowd⁴.

XXXIV

To this there was one marked exception. He revered Abraham Lincoln, and when news came of the assassination he says in his diary :

The day of the murder we heard the news very early in the morning. Mother prepared breakfast—and other meals afterward—as usual ; but not a mouthful was eaten all day by either of us. We each drank half a cup of coffee ; that was all. Little was said. We got every newspaper morning and evening, and the frequent extras of that period, and pass'd them silently to each other⁵.

Two of his best-known poems were inspired by this event, “When Lilacs in the Dooryard Bloomed”, and “My Captain”, of which Stedman said after hearing him recite it :

It is, of his poems, among those nearest to a wonted lyrical form, as if the genuine sorrow of his theme had given him new pinions. He read it simply and well, and as I listened to its strange pa-

thetic melodies, my eyes filled with tears, and I felt that here, indeed, was a minstrel of whom it would be said, if he could reach the ears of the multitude and stand in their presence, that not only the cultured, but "the common people heard him gladly" *.

XXXV

O CAPTAIN ! MY CAPTAIN !

1

O Captain ! my Captain ! our fearful trip is done !
The ship has weathered every wreck, the prize we
sought is won.

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all
exulting,

While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim
and daring.

But, O heart ! heart ! heart !

Leave you not the little spot

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

2

O Captain ! my Captain ! rise up and hear the bells !
Rise up ! for you the flag is flung, for you the bugle
trills :

For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths, for you the
shores a-crowding :

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager
faces turning.

O Captain ! dear father !

O Captain! My Captain! 179

This arm I push beneath you.
It is some dream that on the deck
You've fallen cold and dead!

8

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and
still :

My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor
will.

But the ship, the ship is anchored safe, its voyage
closed and done :

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with ob-
ject won !

Exult, O shores ! and ring, O bells !
But I, with silent tread,
Walk the spot my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

XXXVI

In his old age, looking back upon his work,
Walt Whitman wrote :

After an interval, reading, here in the midnight,
With the great stars looking on—all the stars of
Orion looking,

And the silent Pleiades—and the duo looking of
Saturn and ruddy Mars ;

Pondering, reading my own songs, after a long in-
terval (sorrow and death familiar now),
Ere closing the book, what pride ! what joy ! to find
them

Standing so well the test of death and night,
And the duo of Saturn and Mars !

XXXVII

When he died, *Punch* thus expressed what may well be deemed the fair judgment of his fellows :

WALT WHITMAN

"The good gray poet" gone! Brave, hopeful Walt!
 He might not be a singer without fault,
 And his large, rough-hewn rhythm did not chime
 With dulcent daintiness of time and rhyme.
 He was no neater than wide Nature's wild,
 More metrical than sea winds. Culture's child,
 Lapped in luxurious laws of line and lilt,
 Shrank from him shuddering, who was roughly
 built

As cyclopean temples. Yet there rang
 True music through his rhapsodies, as he sang
 Of brotherhood, and freedom, love and hope,
 With strong, wide sympathy which dared to cope
 With all life's phases, and call nought unclean.
 Whilst hearts are generous, and whilst woods are
 green.

He shall find hearers, who, in a slack time
 Of puny bards and pessimistic rhyme,
 Dared to bid men adventure and rejoice.
 His "yawp barbaric" was a human voice;
 The singer was a man. America
 Is poorer by a stalwart soul to-day,
 And may feel pride that she hath given birth
 To this stout laureate of old Mother Earth.

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. Harriet Beecher Stowe

JUNE 14

Harriet Beecher Stowe

I

In 1810 the first church of Litchfield, Conn., called as pastor Lyman Beecher, the founder of a family which has probably exerted more influence over American thought than any other. There were eight boys, all of them Congregational clergymen, and five daughters, of whom two became famous,—Catharine as a teacher and advocate of the higher education of women, and Harriet as the most successful woman author America has produced.

II

Lyman Beecher remained at Litchfield until 1826, had charge of the Hanover Street church, Boston until 1832, and from that time until 1851 was pastor of the second church at Cincinnati, Ohio, and presi-

(185)

dent of Lane theological seminary. During that period there was no preacher in America better known or of greater influence. In one of the presidential campaigns the democrats published an edition of 40,000 copies of his sermon on duelling, and a sermon of his on temperance resulted in the establishment of the Massachusetts temperance association, and founded a reform movement which still grows. In the contest with the Unitarians he was selected to stand against Dr. Channing as the champion of trinitarian views; and the crisis of his life came from 1836 to 1838, when he founded and defended the new school of presbyterianism.

"He was brusque, independent, unconventional, forceful, arousing attention, and compelling admiration."

III

Harriet Elizabeth Beecher was born June 14, 1812. She taught for a time in her sister's school at Hartford, and in 1836 married Calvin Ellis Stowe, then professor of biblical literature in Lane theological seminary. In 1850 her husband became professor of natural and revealed religion in Bowdoin col-

lege, and in 1852 professor of sacred litera-



CALVIN ELLIS STOWE, 1802-1886

ture in Andover seminary. Here he remained until 1864, when he retired. Mr. Stowe subsequently lived in Hartford, with a winter home in Mandarin, Fla.

After her husband's death in 1886 her mind was not strong, and she died July 1, 1896.

IV

Her first book appeared in 1849, "The Mayflower, or Sketches of the Descendents of the Pilgrims", a book of tales and sketches of New England life. In 1851 she was asked to furnish a story to the *National Era*, an anti-slavery journal printed in Washington. She called the tale "Uncle Tom's Cabin", and expected to complete it in four or five numbers; but it grew as she wrote, and extended in the weekly issues of the paper from Jan. 5, 1851, to April 1, 1852. It ex-

cited considerable interest during its serial publication, and when published in book form made an unparalleled sensation. In this country 150,000 copies were sold within six months, and 313,000 copies within four years; in England 240,000 copies were sold within a month, and more than a million copies within a year. It was translated into 40 different languages. It was dramatized, and is not only still played in the United States (it is appearing at the time we write at two of the large New York city theatres), but has been given in all the capitals of Europe.



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW
1807-1882

The editor of the BULLETIN has recorded his seeing it acted in Spanish in Madrid(xiv:89). We have already (xxiii:100) quoted from Longfellow's diary of Feb. 24, 1853, his envy that at one step she had reached the

top of the staircase which other authors climbed on their knees year after year.

V

The success of the book was due largely to its timeliness. She had been brought up in an anti-slavery atmosphere. Her house in Cincinnati was one of the recognized stations of the underground railroad by which slaves from the South reached Canada and freedom. She made a trip into Kentucky and observed slavery for herself, gathering a great fund of testimony. She wrote the book page after page as she was at work over her stove and about her housework. It was a dramatic expression of facts that just then the world was hungry to know and quick to believe.

VI

Gerald Stanley Lee has recently said¹:

The success of *Uncle Tom* was based upon the moments in which she was a genius and an artist both. The moments of intense conception, of identification with her scenes, which all recognize as coming and going in her work, are to be accounted for in the fundamental preaching instinct of the family to which she belonged. She was not an artist, she was a Beecher. Whenever a Beecher is very indignant about something, or very much

¹ *The Critic*, April 24, 1897.

grieved about it, or stirred with love for it, he follows his heart into an art that no one can forget. The Beechers did not see things, did not conceive them, did not have the artist's gifts for them, unless they were moved with anger or love. The rest of the time they were plain preachers. Their moral genius borrowed artistic genius.

VII

She wrote twenty-five other books, among them two others on the negro: "Dred, A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp", too sombre to be popular, and "Pink and White Tyranny" dealing with the emancipation of the blacks. There is quite a series of books picturing New England life, such as "The Minister's Wooing", "The Pearl of Orr's Island", "Oldtown Folks", "My Wife and I", and "Poganuc People"; but none of them have claims to a permanent place in literature.

While in England in 1853 she formed a strong attachment for Lady Byron. When "The Life of Lord Byron", by the Countess Guiccioli, appeared, Mrs. Stowe published in the *Atlantic Monthly* "The True Story of Lady Byron's Life", and was provoked by the criticisms it aroused into writing "Lady Byron Vindicated", a story of the

Byron controversy, a book which her friends always regretted.

VIII

She will go down into posterity famous because she wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin, and that is enough to assure her place. Chas. A. Dana awhile ago was asked to name the ten American women who would live



HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, 1812-1896 longest in history, and the list he published in the *Sun* included her name, the others being Martha Washington, Rebecca Rolfe (Pocahontas), Molly Pitcher, Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Priscilla Alden, Eliza Goose (Mother Goose), Maria Mitchell, Lucretia Mott.

IX

It is proposed to raise a bronze statue at Hartford, representing Mrs. Stowe in costume and appearance of about the year 1850,

holding in her right hand a pen and in her left a manuscript. Beneath will be a large figure representing Uncle Tom, with hands upraised towards Mrs. Stowe, and on the hands broken shackles. On each side of the main pedestal will be set a large bronze plate about three feet square. On one of these plates will be a figure of Topsy and on the other of Eva.

The statute is well conceived, for her rank as an author will be the greater in proportion as her other books are forgotten.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

JULY 4

Nathaniel Hawthorne

I

There will always be difference of opinion whether Longfellow, Lowell, or Whittier is the greatest American poet ; but there is no question that Hawthorne is the greatest American novelist ; nor is there any question that "The Scarlet Letter" is the greatest single literary work that America has produced.

II

He was born at Salem, Mass., July 4, 1804. His ancestors on his father's side were Puritans of the sternest character, many of them being sea-faring men. His father was a silent, reserved, severe man, habitually of a rather melancholy cast of thought. His mother came from a family also reserved and peculiar, and after his father's death

she lived in the closest retirement forty years. When seven years old he went to a school taught by Joseph E. Worcester, the afterward noted lexicographer. In 1825 he was graduated from Bowdoin college, where he had among his classmates Longfellow, George B. Cheever, and John S. C. Abbott. Franklin Pierce was in the class before him, and was there and through life one of his two or three intimate friends. After several years



GEORGE BANCROFT, 1800-1891

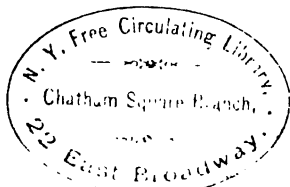
of obscure literary work, he received in 1839 from George Bancroft, then collector of customs at Boston, an appointment as weigher and gauger, which place he held from 1838 to 1840, at a salary of \$1,200. From 1846 to 1850 he was surveyor of the port of Salem at a salary of \$1,200. In 1852, when Franklin Pierce was democratic candidate for president he wrote a biography

of him, saying that he would accept no office in case Mr. Pierce was elected ; but his scruples were overcome, and from 1852 to 1857 he was United States consul at Liverpool. After three years of travel he lived from 1860 to 1864 in "The Wayside", Concord, Mass., and he died May 19, 1864.

III

For twelve years after leaving college he lived in Salem with his mother and two sisters a life of solitude, now and then visiting an uncle in Maine and hunting on the shores of Sebago lake, or spending a week or two with his classmate Horatio Bridge, but spending most of his time in reading, in meditating, and in writing. Most of what he wrote he burned, but some articles were published under assumed names. His dreams during this period are revealed in "The Ambitious Guest", one of his earlier stories, in which he says of the hero, alluding to himself :

A glory was to beam upon his pathway, though not perhaps while he was treading it ; but posterity should confess that a gifted one had passed from the cradle to the tomb with no one to recognize him.



For his twelve years' work he had to show some 45 short sketches*. These were afterwards gathered into two volumes of "Twice-Told Tales", published in 1837 and 1842. In the preface the author wonders rather that they are called for now than that they



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW
1807-1882

did not attract more attention at the time, and perhaps he is not too modest. Few of them would attract attention now except for the reflected light thrown upon them by his later achievements.

But they brought him somewhat into notice. Longfellow, always a kindly critic, said of the book :

* In the preface to "Mosses from an Old Manse" (1846), another collection of tales, he describes the "Old Manse" itself, the house in Concord where Emerson had lived before him, and in which he spent his first four years of married life.

A list of 39 contributions published from 1832-38 is given on pages 175-6 of Julian Hawthorne's "Hawthorne and his wife."

It comes from the hand of a man of genius. Everything about it has the freshness of morning and of May. These flowers and green leaves of poetry have not the dust of the highway upon them; they have been gathered fresh from the secret places of a peaceful and gentle heart; there flow deep waters, silent, calm, and cold; and the green leaves look into them and "God's blue heaven".

IV

"The Scarlet Letter" (1850) was written under a stress of unhappy circumstances. He had just lost his position in the custom house, and was obliged to write for bread for himself and family. When it was half written his mother was taken ill and died. He had debts which he could not pay, and difficulty in getting ready money for the expenses of the household. He had an intolerable attack of earache lasting without intermission for several days, and yet was obliged to take entire charge of the children. Yet the book was in the printers' hands within six months from the time it was begun.

The key to the book is that to peer into the secrets of a human heart without sympathy is the unpardonable sin.

In "The Marble Faun", he says of Miriam :

The more her secret struggled and fought to be told the more certain would it be a change of former relations that had subsisted between herself and the friend to whom she might reveal it. Unless he could give her all the sympathy and just the kind of sympathy that the occasion required Miriam would hate him by-and-by, and herself still more if he let her speak⁴.

V

"The House of the Seven Gables" (1851) was written in about five months. Hawthorne himself thought it had more merit than "The Scarlet Letter", though it would not make so much noise ; but an author usually looks upon his last child as the best.

It is a sombre story of sin and its punishment. Whipple says :

In his long and patient brooding over the spiritual phenomena of Puritan life, it is apparent to the least spiritual observer that he has imbibed a deep antipathy to the Puritanic ideal of character ; but it is no less apparent that his intellect and imagination have been strangely fascinated by the Puritan idea of justice. His brain has been subtly infected by the Puritanic conception of Law, without being warmed by the Puritanic faith in Grace⁵.

Mr. Upham, who was chiefly concerned with turning him out of the custom house, is the Dr. Pyncheon of this story.

There he stands for all time; subtle, smooth, cruel, unscrupulous; perfectly recognizable to those who knew his real character, but so modified as to outward guise that no one who had met him merely as an acquaintance would have suspected his identity¹.

VI

Ellery Channing considered the "Blithedale Romance" (1852) the best of his stories, and it is said that this was Hawthorne's own final judgment. It dealt with Brook Farm, where the incorporators with the number of shares at \$500 each, were the following:

George Ripley	8	Sophia W. Ripley	2
Nath. Hawthorne	2	Maria T. Pratt	2
Minot Pratt	8	Sarah F. Stearns	2
Charles A. Dana	8	Marianne Ripley	3
William B. Allen	8	Chas. O. Whitmore	1

Margaret Fuller, Emerson, Channing, Theodore Parker, Orestes A. Brownson, James Walker, Bronson Alcott, and others were frequent visitors but not members*⁵.

* See the *Atlantic Monthly*, 1878; *Old and New*, Feb., Apr., Sept., 1881; May, 1872.

Hawthorne was here only a short time in 1842, and the enthusiasm with which he entered upon the manual work soon evaporated. In the romance he has in *Zenobia* pictured Margaret Fuller, and in *Miles Coverdale* he has evidently himself in mind.

VII

His "French and Italian Note Books" read in connection with "*The Marble Faun*" (1860), his last great romance, cast much light upon his manner of workmanship.

His first thought of the marble faun as the subject of a romance occurred to him not in the Capitol but in looking upon a copy of the statue in the Borghese casino.

Afterwards he comes back to the Capitol and says :

This race of fauns was the most delightful of all that antiquity imagined. It seems to me that a story with all sorts of fun and pathos in it, might be contrived on the idea of their species having become intermingled with the human race ; a family with the faun blood in them, having prolonged itself from the classic era until our own days*.

The description of the statue in the romance is almost a word for word reproduc-

tion of that in the note-books, even to a slight error respecting the position of the left arm¹, and Hilda's tower, the castle, the discovered statue, and all the background of the story come from descriptions already entered. A little sculptured hand shown him by Hiram Powers became the treasure Kenyon so cherished. The description of Miriam is that of a beautiful Jewess who sat beside him at a dinner given by the Lord Mayor of London ; her studio is reproduced from that of C. G. Thompson, an artist then living in Rome.

VIII

The narrative is like his other stories always reflective ; thus he says :

The city bustle which is heard even in Rome, the rumble of wheels over the uncomfortable paving-stones, the hard, harsh cries re-echoing in the high and narrow streets, grow faint and die away ; as the turmoil of the world will always die if we set our faces to climb heavenward².

Its text is found in this passage :

The story of the fall of man. Is it not repeated in our romance of Monte Beni ? And may we follow the analogy yet farther ? Was that very sin—into which Adam precipitated himself and all his

race—was it the destined means by which, over a long pathway of toll and sorrow, we are to attain a higher, brighter, and profounder happiness than our last birthright gave? Will not this idea account for the permitted existence of sin, as no other theory can?

IX

One of the problems of the book is Hilda's desertion of Miriam. Miriam says to her:

When a human being has chosen a friend out of all the world it is only some faithlessness between themselves, rendering true intercourse impossible, that can justify either friend in severing the bond. Have I deceived you? Then cast me off. Have I wronged you personally? Then forgive me if you can. But have I sinned against God and man, and deeply sinned? Then be more my friend than ever; for I need you more.

Hilda replies:

If I were one of God's angels with a nature incapable of stain and garments that could never be spotted, I would keep ever at your side and try to lead you upward; but I am a poor lonely girl, whom God has set here in an evil world and given her only a white robe, and bid her wear it back to him as white as when she put it on. * * * And, therefore, Miriam, before it is too late, I mean to put faith in this awful heart-quake, which warns me henceforth to avoid you.

X

Arguing the same question again he says :

Hilda shall ask herself whether there were not other questions to be considered aside from that single one of Miriam's guilt or innocence ; as, for example, whether the close bond of friendship in which we once voluntarily engaged, ought to be severed on account of any unworthiness which we subsequently detected in our friend ; for in these unions of hearts—call them marriage or what ever else—we take each other for better, for worse. Availing ourselves of our friend's intimate affection we pledge our own as to be relied upon in every emergency ; and what sadder, more desperate emergency could there be than had befallen Miriam ? Who more need the tender succor of the innocent than wretches stained with guilt ? And must a selfish care for the spotlessness of our own garments keep us from pressing the guilty ones close to our hearts, wherein, for the very reason that we are innocent, lies their securest refuge from further ill ?

But Kenyon thought that Hilda was right, and declared :

But the white, shining purity of Hilda's nature is a thing apart ; and she is bound by the undefiled material of which God moulded her to keep that severity which I as well as you have recognized ?

It is said that this trait in Hilda was taken from his wife's character. His son says :

There was one thing she could not bear, and that was moral evil. Every cloud brought over her horizon by the hand of God had a silver lining, but human unkindness, falsehood, agonized and stunned her,—as in the “Marble Faun” the crime of Miriam and Donatello stunned and agonized Hilda¹.

XI

In June, 1851, he began the “Wonder-Book”, which in simplicity and eloquence of style, and in lovely wealth of fancy and imagination is equal to anything he produced. It was written rapidly and with great enjoyment, and is the only book he ever published without a gloomy page in it. The humor throughout is exquisite, and though the sentiment often mounts to heaven like Bellerophon’s “Winged Steed”, it never outsoars the comprehension of the simplest child. It was finished in a month¹.

Hawthorne said himself of the “Tanglewood Tales”. “I never did anything else so well as these old baby stories¹.”

But his later work was unsatisfactory.

In order to get “Septimius Felton” off his mind he cast aside the first study for it and re-wrote it rapidly to a conclusion,

though the latter part of it was, his son thinks, composed in a spirit of irony towards himself. The whole thing is nonsense, he seems to say ; let us see what it looks like !

XII

His pay for literary work was at first meagre. In 1826 he paid \$100 to publish anonymously at his own expense "*Fanshawe*", a romance which proved unsuccessful, but which has perhaps more movement in it than any other of his stories. S. G. Goodrich, ("Peter Parley") wrote him that had "*Fanshawe*" been put in the hands of more extensive dealers he believed it would have paid a profit ; and offered him \$35 for the privilege of inserting "*The Gentle Boy*" in *The Token*, with permission to publish it afterwards in his collection of Tales. For the volume of *The Token* published in 1836 Mr. Goodrich paid him \$108 for his contributions ; and in the same year Mr. Goodrich offered him \$300 to write a volume of 600 12mo pages on "*The manners, customs, and civilities of all countries*". His friend Bridge writes him in 1836, "Suppose you get but \$300 per annum for your writings,

you can with economy live upon that, though it would be a tight squeeze¹”.

In that year he was made editor of *The American Magazine*, at \$500 a year, but he got little, as it soon became bankrupt.

XIII

Until “The Scarlet Letter” was written his external circumstances had grown more and more unpromising, but from that time forward his means were sufficient for comfortable living. His three great novels were successful in America, and were reprinted in England. For the “Blithedale Romance” he received from England \$1,000 for advance sheets. For the essays on English subjects afterwards collected under the title “Our Old Home” the *Atlantic Monthly* paid him \$200 each. Perhaps his appointment to the consulate at Liverpool was not altogether an advantage, for the next six years produced only his manuscript volumes of English, French, and Italian journals. But this consulate was considered second in dignity only to the embassy in London, and produced an income of some \$10,000.

In December, 1855, he wrote :

I have now got enough to live upon at home with comfortable economy, and may besides reckon upon a considerable income from literature, so that it does not seem worth while to waste a great deal more time in this consular drudgery¹.

But he unadvisedly lent a friend a large sum of money which was never repaid, and thus in his latter years he felt the stress of need.

XIV

He was a remarkable handsome man. He



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

was 5 ft. 10½ inches tall, broad-shouldered, of a light, athletic build, weighing perhaps 150*. The moulding of his neck and throat was as fine as anything in antique sculpture.

His hair, which had a long, curving wave in it, approached blackness in color. His head was large and grandly developed. His eye-brows were dark and heavy, with a superb arch and

* He weighed on his 40th birthday 178 pounds ¹.

space beneath. His nose was straight, but the contour of his chin was Roman. He never wore a beard, and was without a mustache until his fifty-fifth year. His eyes were large, dark blue, brilliant, and full of fervid expression. Bayard Taylor used to say that they were the only eyes he had ever known to flash fire. Charles Reade in a letter written in 1876 declared that he had never before seen such eyes as Hawthorne's in a human head. While he was yet in college an old gypsy woman meeting him suddenly in a woodland path gazed at him and asked, "Are you a man or an angel¹?"

XV

He was a tireless walker, and of great bodily activity. Up to the time he was forty years old he could clear five feet at a standing jump. His voice, which was low and deep in ordinary conversation, had astounding volume when he chose to give vent to it. With such a voice, and such eyes and presence he might have quelled a crowd of mutinous privateermen, at least as effectively as Bold Daniel, his grandfather; it was not a bellow, but had the searching and electrifying quality of the blast of a trumpet.

He seldom exhibited this power. His wife says that when he rose in his might against a cabman who would not take him to the best hotel in Coventry, it was the only time she ever heard him raise his voice to a human being; though it is said that when overseeing the perverse and conscienceless coal-shippers on the Boston wharves he made his voice heard and his indignation felt¹.

XVI

Speaking of Emerson's life at Concord, Holmes says², with accustomed felicity :

He was surrounded by men who ran to extremes in their idiocyncrasies; Alcott in speculations which often led him into the fourth dimension of space; *Hawthorne, who brooded himself into a dream-peopled solitude*; Thoreau, the nullifier of civilization, who insisted on nibbling his asparagus at the wrong end.

All of the Boston literary men speak of his silence in company, and he says himself :

For me there must first be a close and unembarrassed contiguity with my companion, or I cannot say one real word. I doubt whether I have ever really talked with half-a-dozen persons in my life, either men or women³.

And again :

I suspect I am somewhat sterner stuff than many

romancers, and tougher of fibre; but the dark seclusion,—the atmosphere without any oxygen of sympathy—in which I spent all the years of my youthful manhood, have enabled me to do almost as well without it¹.

XVII

Yet he must have been keenly attentive to criticism, for in Rome in speaking of a call from Fredrika Bremer he says :

We found her very little changed from what she was when she came to take tea and spend the evening at our little red cottage among the Berkshire hills, and went away so dissatisfied with my conversational performance, and so laudatory of my brow and eyes, while so severely criticizing my poor mouth and chin².

After a day with Mrs. Jameson he writes :

I bade her farewell with much good feeling on my own side and, I hope, on hers, excusing myself, however, from keeping the previous engagement to spend the evening with her, for, in point of fact, we had mutually had enough of one another for the time being³.

And again of Miss Bremer :

I suspect, by the by, that she does not like me half so well as I do her ; it is my impression that she thinks me unamiable, or that there is something or other not quite right about me. I am sorry if it

be so, because such a good, kindly, clear-sighted, and delicate person is very apt to have reason at the bottom of her harsh thoughts, when, in rare cases, she allows them to harbor with her².

XVIII

He was at no period of his life of sanguine temperament, and whether from philosophic determination or by force of nature he uniformly chose to anticipate the darker alternative of whatever event was developing¹. Lowell tells with gusto that when his friend Pierce had been nominated for the presidency, Hawthorne came to see him, sat down by him on a sofa, and after a melancholy silence, heaving a deep sigh, said, "Frank, *what* a pity!" Then after a pause, "But, after all, this world was not made to be happy in—only to succeed in!"

He elaborates this thought in the Marble Faun :

The once genial earth produces, in every successive generation, fewer flowers than used to gladden the preceding ones. Not that the modes and seeming possibilities of human enjoyment are rarer in our refined and softened era,—on the contrary, they never before were nearly so abundant,—but that mankind are getting so far beyond the childhood of

their race that they scorn to be happy any longer. A simple and joyous character can find no place for itself among the sage and sombre figures that would put this unsophisticated cheerfulness to shame. The entire system of man's affairs, as at present established, is built up purposely to exclude the careless and happy soul. The very children would upbraid the wretched individual who should endeavor to take life and the world as—what we might naturally suppose them meant for—a place and opportunity for enjoyment.

It is the iron rule in our day to require an object and a purpose in life. It makes us all parts of a complicated scheme of progress, which can only result in our arrival at a colder and drearier region than we were born in. It insists upon everybody's adding somewhat—a mite, perhaps, but earned by incessant effort—to an accumulated pile of usefulness, of which the only use will be, to burden our posterity with even heavier thoughts and more inordinate labor than our own. No life now wanders like an unfettered stream; there is a mill-wheel for the tiniest rivulet to turn. We go all wrong, by too strenuous a resolution to go all right^s.

XIX

His son says that he does not remember his father's ever attending church; but he says again :

In Nathaniel Hawthorne the sentiment of reverence was very highly developed, and I do not know

that too much weight can be given to this fact. It is the mark of a fine and lofty organization, and enables its possessor to comprehend, to suffer, and to enjoy things which are above the sphere of other people. It exalts and defines his power of discrimination between right and wrong. It lays him open to mortal injuries, and in opposition it enriches him with exclusive benefits. It opens his eyes to what is above him, and thereby deepens his comprehension of what is around him and at his feet. Reverence combined with imagination and vivified by that faculty of divining God's meaning which applies to genius,—this equipment is of itself enough to educate a man in all the wisdom of the world as well as much that appertains to a higher region¹.

XX

His one great interest seemed to be in moral problems, as his stories show. In one of the galleries of Rome, a portrait bust elicits this reflection :

Lepidus has the strangest, most commonplace countenance that can be imagined,—small-featured, weak, such a face as you meet anywhere in a man of no mark, but are amazed to find on one of the three foremost men of the world. I suppose that it is these weak and shallow men, when chance raises them above their proper sphere, who commit enormous crimes without any such restraint as stronger men would feel, and without any retribution in the depth of their conscience².

He makes Kenyon say :

Perhaps this is to be the punishment of sin, not that it shall be made evident to the universe, which can profit nothing by such knowledge, but that it shall insulate the sinner from all spiritual association by rendering him impermeable to light, and therefore unrecognizable in the abode of heavenly simplicity and truth. Then what remains for him but the dreariness of infinity and eternal solitude?

And again he says, in accord with sound theology :

At the last day—I presume, that is, in all future days when we see ourselves as real—man's one inexorable judge will be himself, and the punishment of his sins will be the perception of them³.

XXI

His marriage was ideal. Of the three daughters of Dr. Peabody of Salem, Elizabeth became a noted educator and philanthropist; Mary married Horace Mann; and Sophia married Nathaniel Hawthorne. His first impression



ELIZABETH PALMER PEABODY,
1804-1894

of her is thus recorded :

She is a flower to be worn in no man's bosom, but was lent from Heaven to show the possibilities of the human soul¹.

He wrote to her in 1839 :

I never until now had a friend who could give me repose ; all have disturbed me, and whether for pleasure or for pain it was still disturbance ; but peace overflows from your heart into mine. Then I feel that there is Now, and that Now must be always calm and happy, and that sorrow and evil are but phantoms that seem to flit across it¹.

He writes again in 1843 :

I thank God above all things that you are my wife. Nobody but we ever knew what it is to be married. If other people knew it this dull old earth would have a perpetual glory round about it¹.

XXII

For her part, she and all the household worshipped him. The manner in which he was idolized at home is indicated by the following letter from his wife :

He has fixed my chamber bell, mended the bellows, mended the rocking chair,—that unfortunate arm which was forever coming off. One day Mr. Hawthorne took hold of it to draw it towards him, and as the crazy old arm came off in his hand he threw himself into a despairing attitude and exclaimed : " Oh, I will flee my country ! " It was indescribably witty. I laughed and laughed¹.

When a man's commonplaces are regarded at home as indescribably witty, he is certainly adored. But no common-place man elicited such a judgment as this from a wife :

Everything noble, beautiful, and generous in his action Mr. Hawthorne hid from himself even more keenly than he hid himself from others. He positively never contemplated the best thing he could do as in the slightest degree a personal matter, but somehow as in simple accordance with God's order,—a matter of course. It was almost impossible to utter to him a word of commendation ; he made praise show absurd and out of place, and the praiser a mean blunderer ; so perfectly did everything take its true place to him, the flame of his eyes stamped compliment cant, sham, and falsehood, while the most wretched sinners—so many of whom came to confess to him met in his glance a sympathy and pity so infinite that they ceased to be afraid to come and again to return to Him. In his eyes, as Tennyson sings, God and nature meet in light, so that he could hardly be quarrelled with for veiling himself from others, since he veiled himself from himself. His own soul was upon the wings of the cherubim,—sacred, like all souls which have not been desecrated by the world. I never dared to gaze at him, even I, unless his lids were down. It seemed an invasion into a holy place. To the last he was in a measure to me a divine message, for he was so to himself. I have an eternity, thank God, in which to know him more and more, or I should die in despair¹.

XXIII

But after leaving Salem, Hawthorne never found any permanent home anywhere. He soon wearied of any particular locality. In America he moved about from place to place and longed for England. He did not enjoy his life in Liverpool, and when in 1855 congress reduced the income of the consulate, thus taking away the only feature that made it tolerable, he wrote to his friend Bright, "I have come back to this black and miserable hole;" adding in a postscript, "I do not mean to apply the above disparaging adjectives merely to my consulate, but to all Liverpool and its environs." He has described his experiences there in "Our Old Home".

While he remained in England he travelled constantly and looked forward to France and Italy.

XXIV

He found Rome intolerably cold and said of the Doria :

If the builder of the palace, or any of his successors, have committed crimes worthy of Tophet, it would be a still worse punishment for him to wander perpetually through this suite of rooms on

the cold floors of polished brick tiles or marble or mosaic, growing a little chiller and chiller through every moment of eternity,—or, at least, till the palace crumbles down upon him^a

His reverence for antiquity yielded to his sanitary sense. He says :

All towns should be made capable of purification by fire or of decay within each half century ; otherwise they become the haunts of vermin and noisomeness, besides standing apart from the possibility of such improvements and are constantly introduced into the rise of man's contrivances and accommodations^a.

To Kenyon's morbid view there appeared to be a contagious element rising fog-like from the ancient depravity of Rome and brooding over the dead and half-rotten city as nowhere else on earth^a.

But he refers again and again to the fascination the city exerts upon the resident.

It is very singular, he says, the sad embrace with which Rome takes possession of the soul^a.

He shows how fully the spirit of the place has taken hold of him when he says :

The very ghosts of that massive and stately epoch have so much density that the actual people of to-day seem the thinner of the two, and stand more ghost-like by the arches and columns, letting the

rich sculpture be discerned through their ill-compacted substance³.

XXV

He was at his happiest when writing the first sketch of "The Marble Faun", in Florence, but while he was in Rome the second time, his daughter Una was sick night unto death, and he watched over her for months. He was never afterward the same man.

Alluding to the scenery between Lyons and Geneva he says :

I have come to see the nonsense of trying to describe fine scenery. There is no such possibility. If scenery could be accurately reproduced in words there would have been no need of God's making it in reality, and I have no heart any longer, as I have said a dozen times, for journalizing¹.

His affections reverted to England once more, but having returned thither he made it but a stepping-stone to America. Finding himself at length in Concord he enlarged and refitted the " Wayside " he had previously bought there, and tried to think that he was content to spend in it the remainder of his days. No sooner had he come to this determination however, than

memories of England possessed him more and more, but led him only to write the English sketches collected in "Our Old Home".

XXVI

He writes in the preface of this book :

Present and Immediate and Actual has proved too potent for me. It takes away not only my scanty faculty, but even my desire for imaginative composition, and leaves me steadily content to scatter a thousand peaceful phantasies upon the hurricane* that is sweeping us all along with it, possibly into a limbo where our opinion and its abolition may be as literally the fragments of a shattered dream as my unwritten romance.

His wife wrote to him July 25, 1861 :

Of all the trials this is the heaviest to me,—to see you so apathetic, so indifferent, so hopeless, so unstrung. Rome has no sin to answer for so unpardonable as this of wrenching off your wings, and hanging lead upon your arrowy feet¹.

He went with his son to the seashore, and wrote back July 28 :

Julian seems to like it exceedingly, and I am not much more discontented with it than with many other spots in this weary world¹.

* The civil war. Hawthorne was always sceptical as to the result, and as to the advisability if it were possible of holding the southern States.

XXVII

In 1863 he grew thinner, paler, and more languid. He sat indoors most of the time, or when he went out would walk slowly and feebly, or stand gazing across the fields with his hands in the side pockets of his coat.

In March, 1864, his friend Ticknor, the publisher, took him to New York and was planning a visit to Baltimore ; but Mr. Ticknor himself suddenly died, and the effect upon Hawthorne was disastrous. His friend Franklin Pierce now came to the rescue. They had been lifelong friends ; they loved, interested, and believed in each other, and Pierce took him to Plymouth, N. H. They went to the hotel, and Hawthorne retired early. Sometime after midnight Pierce, who had been disturbed by the persistent howling of a dog in the courtyard of the hotel, went to Hawthorne's bedside. He still lay in precisely the same position as when he fell asleep, but he was dead¹.

Lowell wrote to J. F. Fields² :

I don't think people have any kind of true notion yet what a master he was, God rest his soul ! Shakspeare, I am sure, was glad to see him on the other side.

XXVIII

So far as it can be analyzed, the elements of Hawthorne's power are his keen insight into human nature, his frank truthfulness, and his marvellous felicity of diction. No other writer could have said just this of Fredrika Bremer :

She has also a very pleasant atmosphere of maidenhood about her ; we are sensible of a freshness and odor of the morning still in this little withered rose—which is recompense for never having been gathered and worn, but only diffusing fragrance on its stem*.

The reader is gratified to participate in such delicate perception, and is constantly finding new light thrown upon his own ethical problems. It may be said that no one can read understandingly any of his four great romances and be quite the same person afterward. So much of vital import is said and suggested that life must be thereafter deeper and richer.

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Oliver Wendell Holmes



OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

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AUGUST 29

Oliver Wendell Holmes

I

A contrast could hardly be more complete than that between Hawthorne and Holmes. Hawthorne was a recluse ; Holmes the soul of good fellowship. Hawthorne was a pessimist ; Holmes the cheeriest of optimists. Hawthorne was a large and strikingly handsome man ; Holmes was in size almost ridiculously insignificant. Hawthorne never had an occupation except literature† ; Holmes was a physician and a college professor. Hawthorne found no rest for the sole of his feet ; Holmes lived his last half-century in Boston. After a weary and disappointed pilgrimage Hawthorne died alone in an obscure country inn ; Holmes's life of sunshine ended peacefully in his Beacon street home.

† His government places were given to him as a literary man, and their duties were performed perfunctorily.

II

The contrast in their writings is equally marked. Hawthorne was almost exclusively a novelist; Holmes wrote novels, but he wrote also poetry, essays, scientific treatises, and biographies. Hawthorne was never satisfied until he had probed into the inner motive; Holmes dealt with surfaces. Both were highly imaginative, but Hawthorne used only images that illustrated, while Holmes followed every butterfly of fancy.

To drop from Hawthorne's serious thoughtfulness to Holmes's complacent volubility, and to reflect that they were for more than half a century contemporaries, with social and literary opportunities much the same, is to realize that what one takes from the sea of life depends upon the shape as well as upon the size of one's cup.

III

He was the son of the Rev. Abiel Holmes, a Cambridge clergyman who married the daughter of President Ezra Stiles of Yale college, and had written a biography of his father-in-law,—but by a second wife. He was born Aug. 29, 1809, the same year

with Poe, Tennyson, Gladstone, Darwin, and Abraham Lincoln. After graduating from Harvard in 1829 and some coquetting with the law, he spent three years in Paris studying medicine. He took his degree in 1836, was for a time professor of anatomy and physiology at Dartmouth, and in 1840 settled in Boston to practise medicine. In 1847 he was made professor of anatomy and physiology in the Harvard medical school, which place he held until 1883. Except that during the war he went to the front to find his son, who had been wounded at Ball's Bluff, and for a second trip abroad in 1886, he rarely left the city of Boston, which on public occasion usually put him forward as her typical representative.

IV

He stood in high repute as a physician, though he gave up active medical practice in 1849. He was the author of several medical works, and his "puerperal fever as a private pestilence", which upon its appearance brought bitter attacks upon him, led to the present universal recognition of puerperal fever as contagious. His essays contain fre-

quent reference to the medical profession, its ethics, its weaknesses, its quacks, all of a kind to dignify a calling in which he thoroughly believed. His essay on "Mechanism in thought and morals" attracted wide attention. He was also the inventor of the stereoscope, an optical instrument not only in itself of great value but a basis for many other important inventions. He declined to patent it, giving it freely to the world.

V

His literary work was at first incidental. In 1830 there was talk of breaking up the frigate *Constitution*, and it stirred him to write and send to the *Advertiser* "Old Ironsides". Though he was but 21, the poem saved the ship, which lies to-day in the harbor at Portsmouth. In 1836 he published a volume of poems; but his reputation was still local when in 1857 he began to contribute to the *Atlantic Monthly* "The Autocrat at the Breakfast Table". These papers ensured the success of the magazine, and made him famous. In 1859 he began "The Professor" and in 1873 "The Poet" at the breakfast table, and many of his best poems ap-

peared in these papers. "The Professor's Story" was "Elsie Venner", a novel which appeared in 1861; and "The Guardian Angel" was the chief attraction of the *Atlantic* in 1867. "A Moral Antipathy" (1885) was the third of these novels.

VI

As a novelist his contrast with Hawthorne may be continued. Hawthorne was a student of human nature, and painted it as he saw it, naught extenuating nor setting down aught in malice. Holmes paints his characters with the broad strokes of Dickens; the most indifferent reader must classify them into sheep and goats, and in the end the sheep are always well-fed and the goats cast into the open. Moreover, all of them are amplifications of a physician's study of certain phenomena. "Elsie Venner" in his own words "contained an alien element introduced into the blood of a human being before that being saw the light, which showed a human nature developing itself in conflict with the ophidian characteristics and instincts impressed upon it during the prenatal period". In "A Guardian Angel" he

sought to show the successive evolution of some inherited qualities in the character of Myrtle Hazard". "A Moral Antipathy" was the story of a man who as an infant had been seized by a strikingly handsome young woman of seventeen, and dropped accidentally some distance into a thorn plant, which gave him an antipathy for handsome young women to be over-come only when just the right handsome young woman became his sweetheart. In all three the art of the novelist is subordinate to the demonstration of the physician. In fact, in "A Mortal Antipathy" the author introduces essays on various subjects that happen to be in his portfolio, and even pauses to talk about his last class-poem and to give it.

VII

Like most little men, he was fond of imagining the valiant deeds of big men. In "Elsie Venner" the schoolmaster's physical prowess makes him the victor in a contest where the modern school story would make him win by brains. In "The Guardian Angel" the hero plunges after a boat which is going over the falls and bids the heroine

cling to him with both arms around his waist as he stands erect, guides the boat as well as he can, and when it is smashed swims with her to the shore. To swim with her clinging in this way he must indeed have been a *very* powerful young man. In "A Mortal Antipathy" the woman who cures the hero of his antipathy first calls forth his admiration at the close of a boat race in which she is the stroke of a young woman's crew, average weight 148 pounds, that has defeated the crew of a neighboring man's college,—the only instance on record, in fact or fiction, where a man has fallen in love with a woman in profuse perspiration.

VIII

But despite all their imperfections as novels, the books are interesting, like everything he wrote, because of their chatty record of a witty author's ideas. Here for instance, are some quotations from "The Guardian Angel":

He had a way of talking with people about what they were interested in as if it were the one matter in the world nearest to his heart, but he was commonly trying to find out something or to produce some impression—as a juggler is working at his

miracle while he keeps people's attention by his voluble discourse and make-believe movements. In his lightest talk he was almost always edging towards a practical object, and it was an interesting and instructive amusement to watch the moment at which he would slip the belt of his colloquial machine onto the tight pulley.—*P. 45.*

We often move to the objects of supreme curiosity or desire not in the lines of castle or bishop on the chess-board, but with the knight's zigzag, at first in the wrong direction, making believe to ourselves we are not after the thing coveted.—*P. 59.*

To know whether a minister, young or still in flower, is in safe or dangerous paths, there are two psychometers, a comparison between which will give as infallible a return as the dry and wet bulbs of the ingenious "Hygrodeik". The first is the black broadcloth forming the knees of his pantaloons; the second, the patch of carpet before his mirror. If the first is unworn and the second is frayed and threadbare, pray for him. If the first is worn and shiny, while the second keeps its pattern and texture, get him to pray for you.—*P. 157.*

Many a woman rejects a man because he is in love with her and accepts another because he is not. The first is thinking too much of himself and his emotions;—the other makes a study of her and her friends, and learns what ropes to pull.—*P. 199.*

Poets, to be sure! Sausage-makers! Empty skins of old phrases,—stuff 'em with odds and ends

Excerpts from "A Mortal Antipathy" 237

of old thoughts that never were good for anything, cut 'em up in lengths and sell 'em to fools !—*P. 204.*

Easy crying widows take new husbands soonest ; there is nothing like wet weather for transplanting. —*P. 230.*

Two whole years, from the age of four to that of six, I had prevailed upon her to give up sugar—the money was saved to a graduate of our institution—who was afterwards——he labored among the cannibal-islanders.—*P. 266.*

There is infinite pathos in unsuccessful authorship. The book that perishes unread is the deaf-mute of literature. The great asylum of Oblivion is full of such, making inaudible signs to each other in leaky garrets and unattainable dusty shelves.—*P. 291.*

IX

Here are some excerpts from "A Mortal Antipathy" :

Wealth is a steep hill, which the father climbs slowly, and the son often tumbles down precipitately ; but there is a table land on a level with it, which may be found by who do not lose their head by looking down from its sharp cloven solitude.—*P. 32.*

The safety of great wealth with us lies in the obedience to the new version of an Old World axiom, *Richesse oblige**.—*P. 32.*

* He uses this *Richesse oblige* again in his poem for the 250th anniversary of Harvard college.

The two learned people of the village were the rector and the doctor. These two worthies kept up the old controversy between the professions, which grows out of the fact that one studies nature from below upwards, and the other from above downwards.—*P. 81.*

A doctor's patients must put their tongues out, and a doctor's wife must keep her tongue in.—*P. 93.*

Those nomadic families common in this generation, the heads of which, especially the female heads, can never be easy where they are, but keep going between America and Europe, like so many pith-balls in the electrical experiment, alternately attracted and repelled, never in contented equilibrium.—*P. 104.*

She had reached that stage of education in which the vast domain of the unknown opens its illimitable expanse before the eyes of the student. We never know the extent of darkness until it is partially illuminated.—*P. 124.*

Whenever we were at work with our microscopes at the institute, I always told her that her mind was the only achromatic one I had ever looked into,—I didn't say looked through.—*P. 162.*

Charlatanism always hobbles on two crutches, the tattle of women, and the certificates of clergymen.—*P. 164.*

I have found that eggs hatch just as well if you let them alone in the nest as if you take them out and shake them every day.—*P. 184.*

There is nothing like the pillow for an oracle.

Autocrat of the Breakfast Table 239

There is no voice like that which breaks the silence of the stagnant hours of the night with its sudden suggestions and luminous counsels. When Euthymia awoke in the morning, her course of action was as clear before her as if it had been dictated to her by the guardian angel.—*P. 199.*

We make no pretensions to what is called "style". We are still in that rural stratum where the article called a "napkin ring" is recognized as admissible at the dinner table. That fact sufficiently defines our modest pretensions. The napkin ring is the boundary mark between certain classes.—*P. 298.*

X

It was this chattiness, abounding in antithesis, epigram, and paradox, as well as metaphor, that made his "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" such an unexpected success. Stedman says :

As a wit no writer of English, unless it be Lowell, at this day vies with him. As a humorist the poet of "The Last Leaf" was among the first to teach his countrymen that pathos is an equal part of true humor; that sorrow is lightened by jest, and jest redeemed from coarseness by emotion, under most conditions of this our evanescent human life'.

XI

To judge his poems fairly one must remember that most of them were written for

special occasions, and could be appreciated only by those who heard him recite them at the time. To look through the Cambridge edition of 350 large double-column pages, one finds comparatively little that has made permanent impression. Of what he calls "Verses from the Oldest Portfolio", and prints in a smaller type as hardly worth preserving, "The Ballad of the Oysterman" and his bride, who now keep an oyster shop for mermaids down below, is still worth remembering among his humorous pieces. "The Star and the Water Lily" begins with this charming stanza :

The sun stepped down from his golden throne,
And lay in the silent sea,
And the Lily had folded her satin leaves,
For a sleepy thing was she ;
What is the Lily dreaming of ?
Why crisp the waters blue ?
See, see ! she is lifting her varnished head !
Her white leaves are glistening through !

XII

Among what he prints as his earlier poems "The Last Leaf" is as characteristic as anything he ever wrote, especially the stanza :

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he had prest
 In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
 On the tomb.

Of his poems of the class of '29, "Bill and Joe", "The Boys", and "Where, oh where Are the Visions of Morning?" are best remembered, especially the last, which has been set to music and is often sung. Some of his best poems appeared in "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table", and probably "The Chambered Nautilus" is the choicest of them all. The last stanza of this he selected to inscribe in the album of the Prince of Wales :

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
 As the swift seasons roll !
 Leave thy low-vaulted past !
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
 Till thou at length are free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea !

XIII

His "Contentment", showing the little that man wants here below, beginning with a brown-stone front, is interesting from the

fact that he says afterward that most of these things are really his.

"The Deacon's Masterpiece, or the Wonderful One-Hoss Shay" is probably the best known of all his poems, and in "Parson Turrell's Legacy" he by no means succeeded in the attempt to write a worthy successor to it. He came much nearer the same level, however, in "How the Old Horse Won the Bet", written for the *Harvard Advocate* in 1876. Here are three couplets :

Budd Doble, whose catarrhal name
So fills the nasal trump of fame.

The quaking jockey shapes a prayer
From scraps of oaths he used to swear.

Moral for which this tale is told :
A horse *can* trot, for all he's old.

XIV

"The School-boy", read at the centennial celebration of the foundation of Phillips academy, Andover, has been printed with illustrations, but like most of his longer poems, it fails to interest. His verses "To the Teachers of America", read in Boston at the reception given to the member of the National Educational Association, are hardly above ordinary newspaper level.

It used to be said of Coleridge that he was one of the few poets who had written too little; it might well be said of Holmes that he is one of the many poets who has written too much.

But there are pearls worth diving for, and in his least inspired verses there is always keen and kindly thought, with a felicity of expression that seldom accompanies such facility. He had the faculty of turning, as Lowell said,

The phrase that stuck but never stung.

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James Fenimore Coor

SEPTEMBER 13

James Fenimore Cooper

I

The prime distinction among novels is between those of adventure and those of character. In novels of character the events are subordinate, serving to reveal and develop the characters. Such were the novels of



JAMES FENIMORE COOPER
(1789-1852).

Hawthorne and of Holmes. In novels of adventure the characters are of subordinate importance, sometimes little more than lay figures, the interest lying in the succession of unexpected events.

Cooper is the most distinguished American

novelist of adventure, and in the world's literature has often been compared with Walter Scott.

II

He was born Sept. 15, 1789, in Burlington, N. J., but before he was a year old his family had removed to Otsego Hall, in what is now the village of Cooperstown. His father was a judge and a member of congress, and his mansion was then and for a long time afterwards the largest private residence in that part of the State. His name originally was James Cooper, but in 1826 the legislature made the family name Fenimore-Cooper. He wrote the name for a time in that way, but afterwards omitted the hyphen.

III

At an early age he was sent to Albany as a private pupil, but in 1802, while only 13 years old he entered Yale college. During his junior year he was dismissed on account of a frolic in which he engaged. In 1806 he went upon the sea as a sailor before the mast, and after a year he entered the navy as a midshipman, remaining a navy officer until

Biography

1811, when he married a daughter of Peter DeLancey, who had been a captain during the revolution. After living a year and a half at Mamaroneck he moved in 1814 to Cooperstown and building a large stone farmhouse; in 1817 was persuaded by his wife to go to Westchester county, where he soon set up his residence at Scarsdale.

IV

His life divides itself naturally into three periods. After 10 years of boyhood at home and 10 years at college and in the army he lived 10 years a quiet family life, without thought of authorship. But in 1820 when he was 30 years old he was one day reading to his wife a novel describing English life when he laid down his book and said "I don't believe I could write a better story myself." His wife challenged him to make good his boast, and on Nov. 10 he published "The Englishman's Boy", a novel in two volumes. It gained him no great credit, for it was a tale of English life, purporting to be written by an Englishman, uttering English words and using English expression. But his friends

that he had succeeded fairly well in describing what he knew nothing about and urged him to write a story of that with which he was familiar. He consented, and the next year (1821) "*The Spy*" was published. This was a tale of the revolution, with the county in which the author had lived for a background, and it met with a sale then unprecedented in the annals of American literature. Editions followed rapidly, the story was dramatized and acted with success, it appeared in England, and its popularity there was as great as in America. Prof. Lounsbury thinks that no tale produced during the present century has had so extensive a circulation¹.

V

He now had a career before him, and from 1820 to 1830 including both years, he brought out 11 books. "*The Pioneers*" (1823) sold 3,500 copies on the first half-day. "*The Pilot*" (1823), due to an argument as to the authorship of Scott's "*Pirate*", and the first of his sea stories, met with instantaneous success. It gave the adventures of John Paul Jones. Less successful was "*Lionel*

Lincoln" (1825), although Bancroft says it gives the best account extant of the battle of Bunker's Hill; but "The Last of the Mohicans" (1826) became perhaps the greatest favorite of all his novels, and brought his fame to its height. Prof. Lounsbury says that no other American before or since has enjoyed so wide a contemporary popularity. "The Prairie" (1827) told the story of Daniel Boone. "The Red Rover" (1828), "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish" (1829), and "The Water Witch" (1830) were less successful. But in 1833 Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, wrote: "In every city of Europe that I visited the works of Cooper were conspicuously placed in the windows of every bookshop. They are published as soon as he produces them in 34 different places in Europe. They have been seen by American travellers in the languages of Turkey and Persia, in Constantinople, in Egypt, at Jerusalem, and at Isaphan."

VI

In 1822 he had moved to New York, and; in 1826, being appointed consul at Lyons, he

sailed with his family and was absent from America more than seven years. The 4th decade of his life, from 1830-1840, witnessed one of the most remarkable reversals of public opinion known to history. From the most popular of American writers he became the most hated, encountering a storm of abuse hardly paralleled.

For this there were several causes. In the first place his impression upon strangers was rarely favorable. "He had infinite pride, and there was in his manner a self-assertion that often bordered or seemed to border upon arrogance. His earnestness moreover was often mistaken for brusqueness and violence, for he was in some measure of that class of men who appear to be excited when they are only interested. The result was that at first he was apt to repel rather than to attract."

Again, while perhaps of all American authors the most patriotic, so that he aroused resentment abroad from his warm defence of his country, yet he did not hesitate to point out her deficiencies. When he returned to Cooperstown in 1834 after his life

among the refinements of Europe, the manners of the people seemed to him worse, the ideals more limited to money-getting, the architecture in worse taste, the towns tawdrier.

VII

This criticism evoked the wrath of the entire nation. He was personally opposed, his books were ridiculed, and his character was attacked. Some controversy over the ownership of a point of land called Myrtle Grove, on Otsego lake, three miles north of Cooperstown, which belonged to his family but had been used by the public as a picnic-ground, led to a warning which he published forbidding the public to trespass upon the property. A mass meeting was called, speeches denouncing Cooper were read, and resolutions passed declaring that he had rendered himself odious to the community. An account of the circumstances appeared in the *Norwich Telegraph*, which the *Otsego Republican* of Cooperstown republished, stating that Cooper, not satisfied with having drawn upon his head universal contempt from abroad, had done the same

thing at Coopertown. Cooper thereupon entered upon his career of libel suits, which involved the principle Whig newspapers of the State. In all of these Cooper was his own lawyer, and in very nearly all of them he was successful, finally forcing Thurlow Weed of the *Albany Evening Journal* to make retraction, and winning before referees his suit against Wm. L. Stone's *Commercial Advertiser*.

VIII

After his victory over the *Commercial Advertiser* in 1842, the rest of the last decade of his life from 1842 to 1851 was a period of repose, and the years from 1840-1845 were his supreme creative period. He wrote "The Pathfinder" (1840); "The Deerslayer" (1841), the most perfect of his novels; "Mercedes of Castile" (1840), a story of the first voyage of Columbus; "The Two Admirals" (1842); "Wing-and-Wing" (1842); "Wyandotte" (1843); "Ned Myers" (1843); "The Autobiography of a Pocket Handkerchief" (1843), only this year re-published; "Afloat and Ashore" (1844); "Satanstoe", and "The Chain-

bearer" (1845). This was the culmination of his authorship. "The Redskins" (1846), "The Crater" (1847), "Jack Tier" (1848), "The Oak Openings" (1848), "The Sea Lions" (1849), and "The Ways of the Hour" (1850), added nothing to his reputation.

IX

He wrote altogether some 70 volumes, including besides his novels the "Chronicles of Cooperstown" (1838), "The History of the Navy of the United States of America" (1839), "Notions of the Americans" (1828), "Sketches of Switzerland" (1836), "Gleanings in Europe" (1837, 1838), and others purely controversial. But the books upon which his reputation rests are the Leather-Stocking tales, and his tales of the sea, together with "The Spy", a revolutionary story. The Leather-Stocking tales give the adventures of Natty Bumppo, a hunter, who is first known as the Deer-slayer in the novel of that name, then as Hawkeye in "The Last of the Mohicans", then as "The Pathfinder" in that novel, then as Leather-Stocking in "The Pio-

neers", and finally as the Trapper in "The Prairie". Of all Cooper's creations this character stands out pre-eminent. Prof. Lounsbury says he is one of the few original characters, perhaps the only great original character that American fiction has added to the literature of the world¹.

The Encyclopædia Britannica says :

In the dignity and simplicity of the old backwoodsman there is something almost Hebraic. With his naive vanity and strong reverent piety, his valiant weariness, his discriminating cruelty, his fine natural sense of right and wrong, his rough limpid honesty, his kindly humor, his picturesque dialect, and his rare skill in woodcraft, he has all the breadth and roundness of a type and all the eccentricities and peculiarities of a portrait².

While these books carried on a continued story in the order named they were written in a different order, "The Pioneers" being the first of them to appear. It is interesting to see how the character of Natty Bumppo in this story is broadened and developed and sweetened in the author's imagination as he writes the other books, until finally when the old hero lies down to die in his prairie home he has become a personal friend to the entire world of novel readers.

X

These stories have especial interest for New York readers because they deal so largely with New York geography and history. The events of "The Deerslayer" all occur upon Otsego lake (Glimmerglass); those of "The Last of the Mohicans" upon the region between Ballston and Lake George; those of "The Pathfinder" upon Lake Ontario and the Thousand Islands; those of "The Pioneers" once more upon the shores of Otsego lake and especially at Cooperstown; and those of "The Prairie", as the name might indicate, in what were then the wilds beyond the Mississippi.

The sea stories are still believed to have no equals. Cooper had lived so long upon the sea, had been in such peril through shipwreck, and knew the construction and management of ships in such detail, that while only a sailor can appreciate their accuracy, the ordinary reader feels that he is borne along upon the waves of reality.

XI

Here for instance, is a description of Glens Falls :

“Ay! there are the falls on two sides of us, and the river above and below. If you had daylight, it would be worth the trouble to step up on the height of this rock, and look at the perversity of the water. It falls by no rule at all; sometimes it leaps, sometimes it tumbles; there, it skips; here, it shoots; in one place 'tis white as snow, and in another 'tis green as grass; hereabouts, it pitches into deep hollows, that rumble and quack the 'arth; and hereaway, it ripples and sings like a brook, fashioning whirlpools and gulleys in the old stone, as if 'twas no harder than trodden clay. The whole design of the river seems disconcerted. First it runs smoothly, as if meaning to go down the descent as things were ordered; then it angles about and faces the shores; nor are there places wanting where it looks backward, as if unwilling to leave the wilderness, to mingle with the salt! Ay, lady, the fine, cobweb-looking cloth you wear at your throat, is coarse, and like a fish-net, to little spots I can show you, where the river fabricates all sorts of images, as if, having broke loose from order, it would try its hand



GLENS FALLS. (From Bardeen's Geography of the Empire State.)

at every thing. And yet what does it amount to ! After the water has been suffered to have its will, for a time, like a head-strong man, it is gathered together by the hand that made it, and a few rods below you may see it all flowing on steadily toward the sea, as was fore-ordained from the first foundation of the 'arth !"

XII

This is how he describes the upper end of Lake George :

"Immediately at the feet of the party, the southern shore of the Horican swept in a broad semi-circle, from mountain to mountain, marking a wide strand, that soon rose into an uneven and somewhat elevated plain. To the north stretched the limpid, and, as it appeared from that dizzy height, the narrow sheet of the 'holy lake', indented with numberless bays, embellished by fantastic headlands, and dotted with countless islands. At the distance of a few leagues, the bed of the waters became lost among mountains, or was wrapped in the masses of vapor that came slowly rolling along their bosom, before a light morning air. But a narrow

opening between the crests of the hills pointed out the passage by which they found their way still further north, to spread their pure and ample sheets again, before pouring out their tribute into the distant Champlain. To the south stretched the defile, or rather broken plain, so often mentioned. For several miles in this direction, the mountains appeared reluctant to yield their dominion, but within reach of the eye they diverged, and finally melted into the level and sandy lands across which we have accompanied our adventurers in their double journey."

XIII

His conception of the Indian character has probably done more than that of any other writer to draw the picture of the traditional Indian in the American mind. Those who live near the present reservations are slow to believe that Indians could have been men of whom Chingachook and Uncas are types. It is said, however, that his early life gave him ample opportunity for mingling with the Indians of his day, and that to the end of his life he maintained that his picture of the virtues and the vices of the Indians was a true one.

This is one of the illustrations he gives of the scout's skilled observation :

"Of that there is little cause of fear," returned the scout, slowly shaking his head ; "this is a firm and straight, though a light step, and not over long. See, the heel has hardly touched the ground ; and there the dark-hair has made a little jump, from root to root. No, no ; my knowledge of it, neither of them was nigh fainting hereaway. Now, the singer was beginning to be foot-sore and leg-weary, as is plain by his trail. There, you see, he slipped ; here he has travelled wide, and tottered ; and there, again, it looks as though he journeyed on snow-shoes. Ay, ay, a man who uses his throat altogether, can hardly give his legs a proper training²."

XIV

Cooper's views upon all subjects were positive and pronounced. The woman, for instance, is always the clinging vine. "There is," says the governess in "*The Red Rover*", "no peace for our feeble sex but in submission, no happiness but in obedience."

In "*Mercedes of Castile*" the heroine is

thus described by her aunt: "Her very nature", she says, "is made up of religion and female decorum." It is evident that the author imagined that in this commendation he was exhausting praise¹.

In "The Deerslayer" he gives this conception of the Indian woman's view of higher education for women:

"No need to spell name at all. Moravian try to make Wah-ta-Wah spell, but no won't let him. No good for Delaware girl to know too much—know more than warrior sometime; that great shame¹."

XV

Of artistic workmanship he had very little. His stories are remarkable for the prolixity of their introductions. In "The Pioneers" it takes 15 chapters to bring the events to the close of the first night³. Besides the complicated sentences and the excess of punctuation marks in which especially his earlier stories abounded, he was careless as to details. In "The Pioneers" the first edition was printed and sold before he discovered that he had changed the name of his heroine. In "The Deerslayer" he sells

five castles out of one set of chessmen. In "The Pathfinder" it was an unpardonable blunder to make a traitor out of Lieut. Muir, and was undoubtedly a change of plan after the eccentricities of that unamiable Scotchman had been developed in a clumsy attempt at humor.

Especially weak is the conversation that he puts into the mouths of his characters. For pages the only difference he makes between what he would have represented as his own conversation and that of Natty Bumppo is that he puts an italic *y* in place of the *i* in such words as reptile.

XVI

Here is some of the language that he ascribes to a hero who could not read and who wiped his nose upon the back of his hand³.

"The lake seems made to let us get an insight into the noble forests, and land and water alike stand in the beauty of God's providence¹."

"Is love so overcoming that it causes a man to study the story of his sweetheart's habitation¹?"

"But 'twas jealousy that brought it out of him, and I do think he mourned over his own thoughts as a mother would have mourned over her child¹."

"All young men must go on the war-path when there is occasion, but war is not needfully massacre¹."

"And where, then, is *your* sweetheart, Deerslayer?"

"She's in the forest, Judith—hanging from the boughs of the trees in a soft rain—in the dew on the open grass—the clouds that float about in the blue heavens—the birds that sing in the woods—the sweet springs where I slake my thirst—and in all the other glorious gifts that come from God's Providence¹."

"God grants no such gifts to any of his creatures, Judith. *He* must be adored, under some name or other, and not creatures of brass or ivory. It matter not whether the Father of all is called God or Manitou, Deity or Great Spirit, He is not the less our common Maker and Master; nor does it count for much whether the souls of the just go to Paradise or happy hunting-grounds, since

He may send each his own way, and suits his own pleasure and wisdom¹."

XVII

The Indian girl who had expressed herself in broken English as above on the education of women, speaks later as follows :

"Tell the Hurons, Deerslayer, that they are as ignorant as moles ; they don't know the wolf from the dog. Among my people the rose dies on the stem where it budded ; the tears of the child fall on the graves of its parents ; the corn grows where the seed has been planted. The Delaware girls are not messengers, to be sent, like belts of wampum, from tribe to tribe. They are honeysuckles, that are sweetest in their own woods ; their own young men carry them away in their bosoms, because they are fragrant ; they are sweetest when plucked from their native stems. Even the robin and the martin come back, year after year, to their old nests : shall a woman be less true hearted than a bird ? Set the pine in the clay, and it will turn yellow ; the willow will not flourish on the hill ; the tamarack is healthiest in the swamp ; the tribes of the sea love best to

hear the winds that blow over the salt water. As for a Huron youth, what is he to a maiden of the Lenni Lenape? He may be fleet, but her eyes do not follow him in the race; they look back towards the lodges of the Delaware. He may sing a sweet song for the girls of Canada, but there is no music for Wah but in the tongue she has listened to from childhood. Were the Huron born of the people that once roamed the shores of the salt lake, it would be in vain, unless he were of the family of Uncas. The young pine will rise to be as high as any of its fathers. Wah-ta-Wah has but one heart, and it can love but one husband¹."

XVIII

The unpardonable fault in many of his novels is that they were written with a purpose. Never should a novel be written as an argument, yet the majority of Cooper's novels were written to enforce his own notions. "Wing-and-Wing" and "Miles Wallingford" gratified Cooper's resentment against the English for experiences of his own while upon a merchant vessel. "The Red Rover" and "The Wept of Wish-ton-

Wish " were filled with satire upon the benevolence and piety of the moral missionaries which England had sent among us. "The Bravo", "The Heidenmauer" and "The Headsman", exalted republican institutions. "The Monikins" a satire upon certain social and political features in England and America, fell dead. "The Redskins", meant to support patroons against the anti-renters had precisely the opposite effect. "Home as Found" expressed his disgust with America and especially with New York City, and justified Lowell's sarcasm that Cooper had written six volumes to prove that he was as good as a lord. "Wyandotte" expressed his adherence to the Episcopal church and his dislike of New England. In fact his biographer notes that as late as 1844 if he sent his heroes to college at all he sent them to Yale; after that year he transferred them to Princeton⁷.

XIX

In spite of all their defects,—and the smaller the critic the easier it will be for him to find these and the more he will dwell upon them,—the best of Cooper's novels are sure of immortality. They are in the first

place historical in the best sense of the word, in that they give a picture nowhere else equalled of a period and of a civilization that have departed. In the second place he has a power of description of natural objects that is masterly, that grasps the reader and compels attention and interest. In the third place his imagination is overpowering when it deals with adventure. The great test of a book is whether it is read; whether it compels the reader who has begun it to finish it. Treated by this test may be doubted whether any American works are surer of immortality than Cooper's. The school and city libraries of to-day find it necessary to duplicate again and again all the Leather-Stocking tales;—the boy who does not know Chingachook and Uncas and the Deerslayer has not followed the judgment of his fellows. Moreover there is this great commendation to be spoken of Cooper, that he never wrote a paragraph that was not morally sound. His ideal is a healthy one, his heroes and heroines are high-minded and pure. A boy who reads his stories will get from them no vile thoughts, no maudlin sentimentality, no unworthy aspirations.

XX

Balzac was one of his great admirers. Speaking of "The Pathfinder" he said :

"It is beautiful ! It is grand ! Its interest is tremendous ! I know no one in the world save Walter Scott who has risen to that grandeur and serenity of colors. * * * Never did the art of writing tread closer upon the art of the pencil. This is the school of study for literary landscape painters. * * * If Cooper had succeeded in the painting of character to the same extent that he did in painting the phenomena of nature he would have uttered the last word of our art."



WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832)

We have referred to the fact that he was often compared with Scott. This was to him a matter of annoyance, although he once spoke of himself as nothing more than a chip from the former's block, and Victor Hugo

pronounced him greater than Scott^s. Scott himself said of an evening in Paris in 1826 :

“Cooper was there, so the Scotch and American lions took the field together.”

But Scott did not admire him. In Lockhart's “Life” the novelist said of Cooper :

“This man who is so much of a genius has a good deal of the manners, or want of manners, peculiar to his countrymen.”

In one respect they suffered together. Along about 1830 there came a reaction against the novel of adventure, and Bulwer was for a time the popular favorite.

XXI

Authorship brought him good returns. While his first books were published at his own expense and risk, the success of “The Spy” was so great that thereafter his books were sought after by publishers in America and England alike. It is said that he received \$5,000 each from England for his earlier stories, and up to the last his London publisher paid him \$1,500 each for them. From 1840 on however, his profits were less from the fact that two weekly newspapers in New York had begun the practice of re-

printing in their columns the writings of the most popular novelists, and an era of cheap books followed. "Wing-and-Wing", "Wyandotte", "The Redskins", "The Crater", "Jack Tier", "The Oak Openings", and "The Sea Lions" were published each in two volumes at 25 cents a volume; "Afloat and Ashore", "Satanstoe", and "Ned Myers" at 37½ cents a volume.

He needed money in the latter part of his life for he lost a good deal in cotton speculation and Western lands. When he died it was found that enough was left to ensure a competence to his family, but the house in which he had lived so many years had to be given up, and not long after the building was burned.

XXII

In character he was a man of strong individuality, with many corners that three-score years failed to round, and prejudices that were often unjust; but there was in his nature no meanness. He was capable of deep resentment, but his warfare was always open and manly. He was charitable—the sculptor Greenough for instance, writes that

Cooper saved him from despair ; and he was as generous as he was irascible and pugnacious. His faults were foibles, not vices ; of temper rather than of character ; and posterity judges him more justly than did his contemporaries.

Prof. Lounsbury's summing-up may be accepted as impartial. Like the defects of his writings, the faults of his character lay upon the surface, and were seen and read of all men. But granting everything that can be urged against him, impartial consideration must award him an ample excess of the higher virtues. His failings were the failings of a man who possessed in the fullest measure vigor of mind, intensity of conviction, and capability of passion. Disagree with him one could hardly help ; but one could never fail to respect him.

XXIII

The fearlessness and truthfulness of his nature are conspicuous in almost every incident of his career. He fought for a principle as desperately as other men fought for life. The storm of detraction through which he went never once shook the almost

haughty independence of his conduct or swerved him in the slightest from the course he had chosen.

There was a royalty in his nature that disdained even the semblance of deceit. With other authors one feels that the man is inferior to his work. With him it is the very reverse. His life was the best answer to many of the charges brought against his country and his countrymen.

America has had among her representatives of the irritable race of writers many who have shown far more ability to get on pleasantly with their fellows than Cooper. She has had several gifted with higher spiritual insight than he, with broader and juster views of life, with finer ideals of literary art, and, above all, with far greater delicacy of taste. But she counts on the scanty roll of her men of letters the name of no one who acted from purer patriotism or loftier principle. She finds among them all no manlier nature, and no more heroic soul⁷.

XXIV

At his funeral Daniel Webster presided and William Cullen Bryant gave the address, which was one of the most eloquent tributes ever paid to him and for many years the fullest account of the life he lived and the work he did¹.



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT
(1794-1878)

He died Sept. 14, 1851, one day before he was 62 years old. While the world misunderstood and maligned him, his home relations were of the happiest. His family were devoted to him. Towards all women he exhibited deference almost to the point of chivalry, and in the case of those of his own household there was mingled with it that tenderness which called forth in return that ardent attachment which strong natures alone seem capable of inspiring¹.

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George Bancroft

OCTOBER 3

GEORGE BANCROFT

I

The programme of the commencement at Harvard college for the year 1817 contains eight quarto-double column pages, with the theses which the graduates "*humilime dedicant*" "*illustrissimo Johanni Brooks, Armigero, Gubernatori*," and his associates. Under head of "*Theses Theologicae*," with the text "*Theologia Dei naturam et attributa, voluntatem et consilia, opera et providentiam perfecti edocet*," there is nearly an entire page given to 28 points in Latin made by "Georgius Bancroft", showing that in early life he had looked forward to the profession of clergyman. He was born at Worcester, Mass., Oct. 3, 1800, and was fitted for college at Phillips-Exeter academy. After graduation from Harvard he went to Ger-

many and received his degree at Göttingen in 1820. An extensive tour in Europe followed, and he returned to America in 1822.

II

For a year he was teacher of Greek at Harvard. The next year he joined Joseph G. Cogswell, afterwards superintendent of the Astor library, in opening a school for the liberal education of boys at Round Hill, Northampton, something on the plan of the English Rugby and Eton.

“Constant supervision, salutary restraint, competent guidance and instruction, and affectionate intercourse, were held out as the means which would be used for counteracting evil propensities, preventing aberrations from duty, exciting to industry and securing improvement.” While it did not deny “the propriety and necessity of corporal suffering as a means of discipline”, it resorted to it rarely, believing that “frequent application was not improving to the character of the pupil or the temper of the instructor².” Pupils were required to attend church and to take part in morning and evening devotional exercises.

III

A pamphlet of 19 pages, published March 25, 1826, gives some account of the school. It admitted no pupils more than twelve years old, receiving boys only "while yet very young, before they can have formed bad habits, and before any constitutional defects become confirmed." The study of English was first in importance. "One instructor" was "exclusively devoted to elocution." There were native teachers of "French, Spanish, German and Italian"—an unusual arrangement for those languages. There were some boys to whom they taught no Latin, and more to whom they taught no Greek, but instruction was provided to any extent desired. While favoring literary in preference to scientific pursuits "because they exercise intimate and direct influence on morals," they considered education imperfect without the latter, and assigned "a very considerable portion of time" to mathematics. They considered the most approved method of teaching the inductive. "Food, sleep, and exercise must be regulated, purity protected, life guaranteed

against casualties, and temperance and exercise be set, even in the dawn of existence, to keep watch over health." A pupil and friend of Jahn was secured to teach gymnastics. In discipline the principle of subordination was considered "a fundamental one, incapable of any compromise, and admitting no evasion." A uniform was required: "Coat or roundabout and trousers of blue grey broadcloth with bright buttons, waist coat of light blue kerseymere, for winter. Blue nankin or cotton suit complete for summer; and for holidays—blue silk or bombazine coat or roundabout, white jacket and trousers, drill or marseilles." There were only two vacations, in April and October, of three weeks each. The terms were \$300 a year "for living and instruction".

IV

In 1831, when Mr. Bancroft retired from the school, it had numbered altogether^s 290 pupils: 99 from Massachusetts, 46 from New York, 32 from Maryland, 34 from South Carolina, with representatives from 13 other States, from Lower Canada, the

West Indies, Mexico, Brazil, and Europe. There are many well-known names in this list : Thomas G. Appleton, Henry W. Bellows, W. Ellery Channing, William Lawrence, Samuel J. May, Samuel T. Morse, Lathrop J. (John Lothrop) Motley, Harrison G. Otis, George Peabody, Joseph White, of Massachusetts ; James C. Brevoort, Philip Kearney, and Samuel Ward, of New York ; and so on.

But it had never prospered financially, and he was glad to give it up to devote himself entirely to literary work. In 1835 he removed to Springfield.

V

As early as 1823 he had published a volume of poems, and he had since then been a contributor to the *North American Review* and the *American Quarterly Review*. He translated not only German poems, but three of the historical works of Heeren, his favorite professor at Göttingen. But the work of his life appeared first in 1834, when the initial volume of his "History of the Colonization of the United States" was published in Boston.

VI

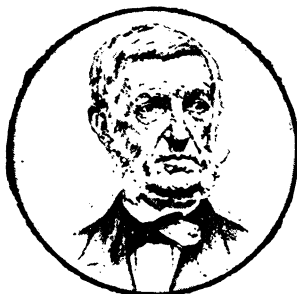
In his preface he says :

I have formed the design of writing a history of the United States from the discovery of the American Continent to the present time. As the moment arrives for publishing a portion of the work, I am impressed more strongly than ever with a sense of the grandeur and vastness of the subject ; and am ready to charge myself with presumption for venturing on so bold an enterprise. I can find for myself no excuse but in the sincerity with which I have sought to collect truth from trustworthy documents and testimony. I have desired to give to the work the interest of authenticity. I have applied, as I have proceeded, the principles of historical skepticism, and, not allowing myself to grow weary in comparing witnesses, or consulting codes of laws, I have endeavored to impart originality to my narrative, by deriving it from writings and sources which were the contemporaries of the events that are described. Where different nations or different parties have been engaged in the same scenes, I have not failed to examine their respective reports. Such an investigation on any country would be laborious ; I need not say how much the labor is increased by the extent of our republic, the differences in the origin and early government of its component parts, and the multiplicity of topics, which require to be discussed and arranged^s.

The three volumes under this title appeared in 1834, 1837, and 1840.

VII

In the meantime he had taken active part in politics. His



IN MIDDLE LIFE

first address was on July 4, 1826, at Northampton, the day that Adams and Jefferson died ; and he did so much for his party that he was in January, 1838, ap-

pointed collector of the port of Boston, where he remained until he resigned when Harrison took office in 1841. In 1845 he was made by President Polk secretary of the navy, and in this capacity established the U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis and by prompt action in sending a fleet to the Pacific saved California to us. While for a month acting secretary of war, in 1846 he ordered Gen. Taylor to advance to Rio Grande, the step that directly led to the

Mexican war. In September, 1846, he resigned to become minister to Great Britain, where he remained until the summer of 1849. From 1867 to 1874 he was minister to Germany. His services as ambassador were able and successful. The Emperor William I. gave him his portrait with the inscription "The Emperor William I. to his friend George Bancroft, in remembrance of the years 1867-74."

VIII

All this time he had been still at work upon his history. In 1852 he published the first volume of his "History of the American Revolution", and other volumes appeared in 1853, and 1854, at which time the earlier volumes had reached their 15th edition. The entire work was now known as his "History of the United States." The 7th volume appeared in 1858, the 8th in 1860, and the 9th in 1866. The 10th volume, bringing the narrative to the treaty of peace in 1782, appeared in 1874. In 1882 his "History of the Formation of the Constitution" appeared in two volumes. Though under another title these really made the

11th and 12th volumes of his "History of the United States". But he had already made a revision of the entire work, which in 1876 appeared in 6 volumes. The final revision appeared in 1885. After thus spending more than half a century upon this one great achievement, he died in Washington, Jan. 17, 1891, his life almost entirely covering the 19th century.

IX

The dignified statement of lofty purpose in his first preface was an earnest of the work of his life. His official places gave him opportunity unequalled to examine original documents in this country and in Europe, and he left no stone unturned to give in every instance the exact fact, with all the local coloring that investigation could recover. He dictated rapidly, but rewrote again and again. One of his earliest volumes was in its original form eight times as long as when published⁶. History is in his hands not a chronicle, but a philosophical narration, and for the period which it covers his work must always be the standard authority.

X

His life was mostly in the sunshine. He



IN OLD AGE

married twice, both times happily, and his home-life was delightful. He entertained many distinguished authors and statesmen, and was himself a welcome guest at

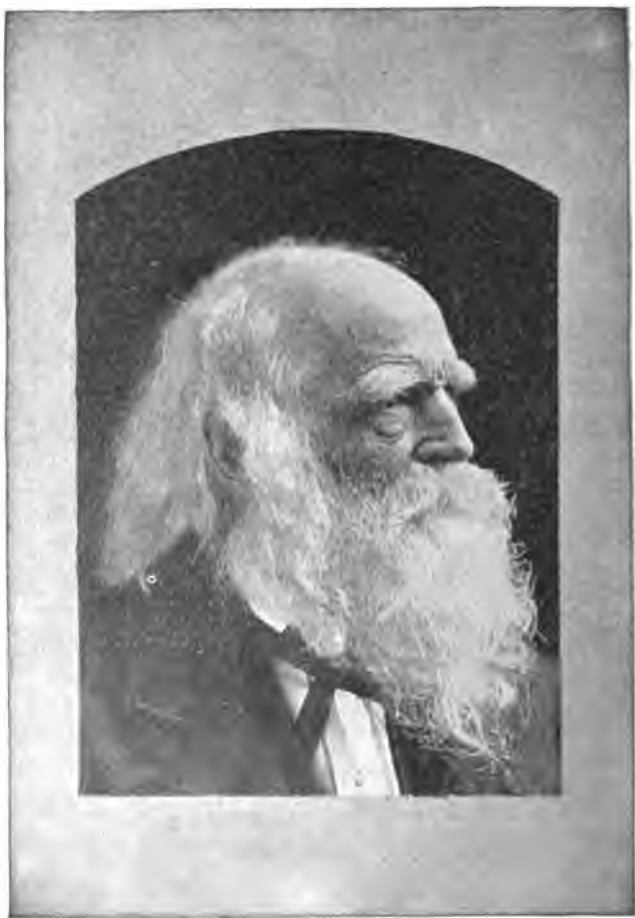
many of the choicest gatherings in this country and in Europe. Charles Dickens said of him, "Bancroft is a famous man; a straightforward, manly, earnest heart^s." As history was his work, so roses were his hobby. At Roseclyffe, his summer home at Newport, he spent much of his time among his flowers, and recorded them as carefully as his documentary records. He was also fond of horse-back riding. When he was 80 years old he rode his young Kentucky thoroughbred 36 miles one day, along the banks of the Potomac^s.

When he was a boy his mother said to him: "My son, I do not wish you to become a rich man, but I would have you be an affluent man; *ad fluo*, always a little more coming in than going out⁶." He was true to this wish, and leaves the example of a long and well-spent life.

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William Cullen Bryant



William Cullen Bryant

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NOVEMBER 3
WM. CULLEN BRYANT

I

Bryant's life was almost contemporary with Bancroft's. He was born six years earlier and died thirteen years earlier, lacking sixteen years of completing a century. He was born Nov. 3, 1794. His father was a western Massachusetts physician of Puritan stock, and his mother was, like Longfellow's, a lineal descendant of John Alden, and Priscilla Mullins. He was precocious from the start. His head was of such abnormal size that his father used to dip it every morning in a spring of cold water. He knew his letters when he was sixteen months old, went to school at four, could repeat Watts's hymns at five, made verse at eight, and at ten delivered a rhymed address, and got ninepence from his grandfather for turning the first chapter of Job into verse. At fourteen

he brought out two political poems, and when a second edition was demanded a certificate of his age was inserted. At seventeen he wrote the poem *Thanatopsis*, which still gives him his greatest fame. At twenty-five he read the poem before the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa society, at thirty-one became editor of the *United States Review*, and at thirty-five of the *Evening Post*, on which his main work was to be for half a century.

II

At sixteen he entered Williams college, but withdrew after two terms, and studied law. He practised for a time in Plainfield and Great Barrington, but gave much of his time to writing. In



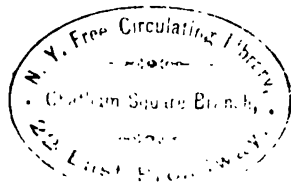
GULIAN C. VERPLANCK, 1786-1870

1821 he published his first collection of poems. It was reviewed with warm commendation by Gulian C. Verplanck, the literary authority of the

time, through whom he was appointed assistant editor of a projected periodical to be called the *New York Review*. In 1825 he removed to New York, but the magazine did not prove a success, and his poems brought him little. When in his later life a friend spoke of paying \$20 for a copy of the first edition of his poems, Mr. Bryant said, "More by a long shot than I ever received for writing the whole work". So the young poet gave up literature as a profession, writing to his friend Dana, "You know politics and a belly-full are better than poetry and starvation". In 1828 he entered journalism, soon becoming editor-in-chief and part owner of the *Evening Post*.

III

In this he was eminently successful. The *Evening Post* when he took it was a strong federalist paper, but he changed it into an organ of democracy and free trade. Journalism was somewhat violent in those days, and he never hesitated to express his opinions with emphasis and to defend them even when personal violence was threatened. On one occasion he attacked another editor,



William L. Stone, with a cowhide*. He defended the abolitionists and opposed the annexation of Texas and the war with Mexico. The paper was denounced by his party, and he was instrumental in forming the free-soil party in 1848. In 1856 he joined the republican party, and in 1860 was one of the presidential electors of Abraham Lincoln. Throughout the war he was a vehement defender of the Union, and an advocate of the emancipation of the slaves; after the war he counselled a policy of reconciliation. Prosperity followed his adherence to conviction, and in his later life he was able to gratify all his tastes. His residence at Roslyn, Long Island, was known as Cedar-mere.

IV

What might have been his literary rank had the rewards of his strictly literary work been sufficient to warrant him in giving all his time to it, can perhaps hardly be estimated. Certainly the spare time that he gave to poetry in his later life did not produce anything to equal the importance of his early work. When a man who dies at



CEDARMERE

Bryant's Home at Roslyn

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ninety-four is best known by a poem he wrote at seventeen, the promise of his youth has not been fulfilled. He published another edition of his poems in 1832, and still another, somewhat enlarged, in 1842. In 1863 he published "Thirty Poems", which were afterwards incorporated in the regular editions. He never tried to write a long poem, holding the opinion afterwards elaborated by Poe, that a long poem is, like a long ecstasy, impossible, and that the great works of Homer, Dante, Spencer, Tasso, and Milton, are merely a collection of short poems strung together upon a thread of story¹.

V

After the death of his wife in 1872 he felt like Longfellow the necessity of some distraction from the sorrows of his loss, and like Longfellow (see page 52) undertook translation, turning the Iliad and the Odyssey into blank verse at the rate of forty lines a day². But the best literary work of his later life was his orations and addresses, many of which showed much power as well as grace. To the last of these addresses he owed his death. He had accepted the invi-

tation of the Italian residents of New York to speak at the unveiling of the statue of Mazzini in Central Park on May 29, 1878. He was exposed to the sun for some hours, and after walking across the Park fell as he ascended the steps of the house of a friend. He was stunned, and died on June 12.

VI

He had a distinct poetic creed that the best poetry was to be found "in the vicissitudes of human life, in the emotions of the human heart, and in the relations of man to man," and that "he who can present them in combinations and lights which at once affect the mind with a deep sense of their truth and beauty is the poet." Yet this hardly describes the poems by which he is the best known. He was eminently a meditative poet. As such he is often compared with Wordsworth, whose "Excursion" was written after "Thanatopsis". Stedman says that Wordsworth was the master of Bryant's youth; and quotes him as saying that "Upon opening Wordsworth a thousand springs seemed to gush up at once in his heart, and the face of nature of a sudden to change into

strange freshness and life¹." But while in choice of simple subjects in nature and in manner Bryant resembles Wordsworth, he has no such profundity or breadth of view.

VII

Nor has he the same care in expression. Dorothy Wordsworth remarks somewhere in her journal, "William has come back tired : he has spent all day in thinking of an adjective for the cuckoo." But Bryant does not hesitate to write, "The sun was near his set¹⁰."

As a recent critic has well pointed out, in Wordsworth we find this sensitive recognition of nature "through the veil that seems to hide",—nature as we would fain believe her, our virgin mother, a Primavera singing out of the very dust of which our bodies are wrought. In Bryant we find that Nature is but a key to himself. High, serene, calm, and sometimes beautifully so, she rises like an eidolon of Bryant¹⁰.

VIII

He continues,

Through Wordsworth we learn love and reverence for nature ; he teaches us that she will suffer

us like little children to come unto her, and we find rest, refreshment and delight.

"She gives us eyes she gives us ears
And tender hopes and delicate fears.
A heart the fountain of soft tears
And love and thought and joy."

In Bryant nature is a patch on a New England hillside. There is much beauty, much tenderness, much room for virtuous reverie and noble thought, but nature for him does not vary with its changing seasons. It is October, sunshine or shade, all the year; there is but one music in the pines, but one rustle in the fallen leaves; the grasses speak in monotone. Sometimes, it is true, Bryant is half-conscious of a girlish spirit in nature, as if she were dodging round his subject, too quick to catch. He attempts to lay hold of her, and writes *Sella and Little Children of the Snow*. But nature, the wood nymph, is denied to him; she enchants all poets, they all woo her "on summer eves by haunted stream," but few hold commerce with her. Few can say:—

"Here at the fountain's sliding foot
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside
My soul into the boughs does glide."

IX

But he adds:

Although Bryant does not reveal to us the holy spirit of nature as Wordsworth does, or nature the forest nymph as Theocritus does, or even portray

all her outward aspects, he does show the most important significance of nature for us. That light carelessness which some poets have, which from its very lightness is able to catch "the gay notes that people the sunbeams," is meet for the holiday time of life, for feast-days and for youth. We have a more abiding need. We need a constant insistence upon the moral law. Our faith is weak ; with the bodily eye we cannot always discern how that law prevails in the world about us. The difficulties of belief cannot be overcome without the help of beauty, which bare laws of cause and effect, probable rules for escaping evils, cannot of their own nature put on. We need poets to make that moral law beautiful in our eyes, to "endue it with heavenly gifts," to cover it with "thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls" or with an authority that we will not question. Whatever man does so deserves well of the people. Bryant, in narrow limits, perhaps, and with uneven powers, has done this for us. Men with need of metaphysical and subtle reasonings, and men too much in the glare of common sense, may not feel the value of his work, but

"Country folks who live beneath
The shadow of the steeple,
The parson and the parson's wife
And mostly married people,
Youth green and happy in first love
So thankful for illusion,"—

all these will feel that Bryant has added a touch of poetry to that moral law, has helped to show more clearly a loveliness which our hearts accept as inher-

ent in it, and to show how that moral beauty belongs to Earth, our mother, and is somehow in harmony with the powers that draw the tracery in ferns and frost, and put their colors in the poppy and the dandelion. "The Forest Hymn", "The Planting of the Apple Tree", "The Death of the Flowers", "O Fairest of the Rural Maids", "Green River", and a number of other poems, incompletely perhaps, and with various degrees of excellence, bear witness to this great service which he has thus rendered to us.

X

Next to *Thanatopsis* perhaps his most famous poem is



MATTHEW ARNOLD, 1822-1888

"*To a Waterfowl*". Hartley Coleridge once read this to Matthew Arnold, after asking him if he wished to hear the best short poem in the English language.

It was written in 1815, when he was 21 years old.

TO A WATERFOWL

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,

Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way ?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side ?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end ;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form ; yet, on my heart
Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

XI

Another of his best known poems is "A Forest Hymn", beginning :

The groves were God's first temples.

But perhaps the line of his most often quoted is the first of the following poem, written not long after.

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the
year,

Of walling winds, and naked woods, and meadows
brown and sere.

Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn
leaves lie dead ;

They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's
tread ;

The robin and the wren are flown, and from the
shrubs the jay,

And from the wood-top calls the crow through all
the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that
lately sprang and stood

In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sister-
hood ?

Alas ! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of
flowers

Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good
of ours.

The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold
November rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones
again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long
ago,

And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the
summer glow ;

But on the hills the golden-rod, and the aster in the
wood,

And the yellow sun-flower by the brook in autumn
beauty stood,

Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls
the plague on men,

And the brightness of their smile was gone, from
upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still
such days will come,

To call the squirrel and the bee from out their win-
ter home ;

When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though
all the trees are still,

And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fra-
grance late he bore,

And sighs to find them in the wood and by the
stream no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty
died,

The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by
my side.

In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forests
cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life
so brief :
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young
friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the
flowers.

XII

The declamation days of forty years ago resounded with "The African Chief", beginning :

Chained in the market place he stood,
A man of giant frame.

"The Evening Wind", "To the Fringed Gentian", "The Planting of the Apple Tree", and the Flood of Years" are all well known.

But none of these touch the heart like the poems of Longfellow. The fact is Bryant was cold. Lowell wrote :

There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignifed,
Save when by reflection 't is kindled o' nights
With a semblance of flame by the chill Northern
Lights.

He may rank (Griswold says so) first bard of your nation

(There 's no doubt that he stands in supreme isolation),
Your topmost Parnassus he may set his heel on,
But no warm applauses come, peal following peal
on,—
He 's too smooth and too polished to hang any zeal
on :
Unqualified merits, I 'll grant, if you choose, he has
'em,
But he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm ;
If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
Like being stirred up with the very North Pole.

XIII

In his own verses on the poet there are
these stanzas,

The secret wouldst thou know
To touch the heart or fire the blood at will ?
Let thine own eyes o'erflow ;
Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill ;
Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be past,
And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast.

Then, should thy verse appear
Halting and harsh, and all unaptly wrought,
Touch the crude line with fear,
Save in the moment of impassioned thought ;
Then summon back the original glow, and mend
The strain with rapture that with fire was penned.

XIV

Little of this thrill, this glow, appears in his poems. They might all have been written like his translations, at the rate of forty lines a day. In the poem entitled "*A Life-time*" he reviews his career. It was written soon after the death of his wife. The last stanzas are these :

And one there is among them,
With a star upon her brow,
In her life a lovely woman,
A sinless seraph now.

I know the sweet calm features ;
The peerless smile I know,
And I stretch my arms with transport
From where I stand below.

And the quick tears drown my eyelids,
But the airy figures fade,
And the shining battlements darken
And blend with the evening shade.

I am gazing into the twilight
Where the dim-seen meadows lie,
And the wind of night is swaying
The trees with a heavy sigh.

One has only to compare these with Browning's "*Lines to E. B. B.*" to see what a difference there is between feeling and the con-

templation of feeling. During Mrs. Bryant's illness Hawthorne met Bryant at the house of the Brownings in Florence, and wrote :

I take him to be one who cannot get closely home to his sorrow, nor feel it so sensibly as he gladly would ; and in consequence of that deficiency, the world lacks substance to him. It is partly the result, perhaps, of his not having sufficiently cultivated his emotional nature. His poetry shows it and his personal intercourse, though kindly, does not stir one's blood in the least⁹.

XV

It has been said that there was no humor in his verse, but there are attempts at humor, as in "To a Mosquito", "A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal", and "Robert of Lincoln"; in fact, the last has so much more of brightness and joy in it than most of his poems that we give it.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name :
Bob-o'-link, bob o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers,
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat ;
White are his shoulders and white his crest.

Hear him call in his merry note :

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,

Spink, spank, spink ;

Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.

Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,

Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,

Passing at home a patient life,

Broods in the grass while her husband sings :

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,

Spink, spank, spink ;

Brood, kind creature ; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.

Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she ;

One weak chirp is her only note.

Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,

Pouring boasts from his little throat :

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,

Spink, spank, spink ;

Never was I afraid of man ;

Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can !

Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,

Flecked with purple, a pretty sight !

There as the mother sits all day,

Robert is singing with all his might :
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food ;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink,
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care ;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air :
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes ; the children are grown ;
Fun and frolic no more he knows ;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone ;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes :
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;

When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

XVI

There certainly was humor in his nature, for this is how he describes his marriage.

DEAR MOTHER :—I hasten to send you the melancholy intelligence of what has lately happened to me.

Early on the evening of the eleventh day of the present month I was at a neighboring house in this village. Several people of both sexes were assembled in one of the apartments, and three or four others, with myself, were in another. At last came in a little elderly gentleman, pale, thin, with a solemn countenance, pleuritic voice, hooked nose, and hollow eyes. It was not long before we were summoned to attend in the apartment where he and the rest of the company were gathered. We went in and took our seats; the little elderly gentleman with the hooked nose prayed, and we all stood up. When he had finished most of us sat down. The gentleman with the hooked nose then muttered certain cabalistical expressions, which I was too much frightened to remember, but I recollect that at the conclusion I was given to understand that I was married to a young lady of the name of Francis Fairchild, whom I perceived standing by my side, and I hope in the course of a few months to have

the pleasure of introducing to you as your daughter-in-law, which is a matter of some interest to the poor girl, who has neither father nor mother in the world*.

XVI

In his language he was severely simple. He once gave the following advice to a young man who had offered an article for the *Evening Post*.

My young friend, I observe that you have used several French expressions in your letter. I think if you will study the English language, that you find it capable of expressing all the ideas that you may have. I have always found it so, and in all that I have written I do not recall an instance where I was tempted to use a foreign word, but that, on searching, I have found a better one in my own language.

Be *simple, unaffected*; be *honest* in your speaking and writing. Never use a long word when a short one will do as well.

Call a spade by its name, not a well-known oblong instrument of manual labor; let a home be a home, and not a residence; a place, a place, not a locality; and so on of the rest. When a short word will do, you always lose by a long one. You lose in clearness; you lose in honest expression of meaning; and in the estimation of all men who are capable of judging, you lose in reputation for ability.

The only true way to shine, even in the false world, is to be modest and unassuming. Falsehood may be a thick crust, but in the course of time truth will find a place to break through. Elegance of language may not be in the power of us all, but *simplicity* and *straightforwardness* are.

Write much as you would speak, and as you think. If with your inferior, speak no coarser than usual; if with your superior, speak no finer. Be what you say and within the rules of prudence. No one was ever a gainer by singularity of words or in pronunciation. The truly wise man will so speak that no one will observe how he speaks. A man may show great knowledge of chemistry by carrying bladders of strange gases to breathe: but one will enjoy better health, and find more time for business, who lives on common air.

XVII

It will be observed that he is not always careful to be accurate. Coarser and finer should be adverbs. Stedman says,

As for his diction, he began when there was no Feast of Pentecost with its gift of tongues. I think that the available portion of a poet's vocabulary is that which he acquires in youth, during his formative period. It is easier for an adult to learn a foreign language than to enlarge greatly his native range of words, and have them at every-day command. Bryant's early reading was before the great

revival which brought into use the romance-words of Chaucer, Spenser, and the Elizabethan age. It was derived from the poorest, if the smoothest English period—that which began with Pope and ended with Cowper. The rich advantage of a modern equipment is visible in Tennyson, who had Keats and Shelly for his predecessors; not to consider Swinburne, who, above his supernatural gifts of rhythm and language, owes much to youthful explorations in classic and Continental tongues. No doubt Bryant's models confirmed his natural restrictions of speech. But even this narrow verbal range has made his poetry strong and pure; and now, when expression has been carried to its extreme, it is an occasional relief to recur to the clearness, to the exact appreciation of words, discoverable in every portion of his verse and prose. It is like a return from a florid renaissance to the antique; and indeed there was something Doric in Bryant's nature^s.

XIX

Edward Everett said of him,

The beautiful, pathetic, and sublime, are always simple and natural, and marked by a certain serene unconsciousness of effort. This is the character of Mr. Bryant's poetry^s.

Prof. Wilson wrote,

The chief charm of Bryant's genius consists in tender pensiveness and moral melancholy breathing

The Man Greater than his Work 319

through all his contemplations, dreams, and reveries, even such as in the main are glad, and giving assurance of a pure spirit, benevolent to all human creatures, and habitually pious in the felt omnipresence of the creator. His poetry overflows with natural religion—with what Wordsworth calls “the religion of the woods”.

XX

Unquestionably the man was greater than his work. For the celebration of his 70th birthday Whittier wrote :

We praise not now the poet's art,
The rounded beauty of his song ;
Who weighs him from his life apart
Must do his nobler nature wrong.

His was a noble, self-contained, calm, virtuous life. In his habits he was a Spartan. To the end of his life he rose early in the morning, exercised with dumb bells, pole, and horizontal bar for an hour or more before breakfast, adhering to a spare diet, and walking rain or shine to and from his office, three miles away^s. His fine face was the delight of painters and sculptors. At his funeral his poem “June” was recited.

JUNE

I gazed upon the glorious sky
And the green mountains round,
And thought that when I came to lie
At rest within the ground,
'Twere pleasant, that in flowery June,
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
And groves a joyous sound,
The sexton's hand, my grave to make,
The rich, green mountain-turf should break.

A cell within the frozen mould,
A coffin borne through aleet,
And icy clods above it rolled,
While fierce the tempests beat—
Away!—I will not think of these—
Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,
Earth green beneath the feet,
And be the damp mould gently pressed
Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours,
The golden light should lie,
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon
With fairy laughter blent ?
And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothed lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument ?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know that I no more should see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow ;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene ;
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is that his grave is green ;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

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⁵ Death of William Cullen Bryant. Edmund Clarence Stedman, *Atlantic Monthly*, xlii. 747.

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John Greenleaf Whittier

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DECEMBER 17

John Greenleaf Whittier

I

In 1869 Whittier wrote for the Burns festival in Boston :

Rendering to Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning the homage which the intellect owes to genius, we turn to Burns if not with awe, with reverence, with a feeling of personal interest and affection. We admire others, we love him.

So the reader turns from Bryant to Whittier. Bryant wrote much which appeals to our intellects, but Whittier has touched all our hearts. He has attained that greatest triumph of the poet, that when some of our tenderest feelings come to us it is his words which best satisfy us to express them.

II

He is especially the poet of common life. Stedman says :

His muse shielded him from the relaxing influence of luxury and superfine culture. These could not reach the primitive homestead in the beautiful Merrimac Valley, five miles out from the market-town of Haverhill, where all things were elementary and of the plainest cast... There was no affectation in the rusticity of his youth. It was the real thing, the neat and saving homeliness of the eastern farm.... Of our leading poets he was almost the only one who learned nature by working with her at all seasons, under the skies, in the wood and field⁴.

III

Whittier was born in the same year with Longfellow in a lonely farmhouse three miles southeast of the city of Haverhill. The winding road leading to it is the one described in "Snowbound". Near the road is the brook he describes, and the inner life of the Quaker poet's family is pictured in "Snowbound", which Kennedy calls, "a little idyl, as delicate, spontaneous, and true to nature in its limnings, as a minute frost picture on a pane of glass, or the fairy landscape, richly mirrored in the film of a water-bubble⁴."

IV

His first schoolmaster was Joshua Coffin

to whom Whittier has written a poetical epistle, in which he says :

I, the urchin unto whom,
In that smoked and dingy room,
Where the district gave thee rule
O'er its ragged winter school,
Thou didst teach the mysteries
Of those weary A, B, C's,—

Where, to fill the every pause
Of thy wise and learned saws,
Through the cracked and crazy wall
Came the cradle-rock and squall,
And the goodman's voice, at strife
With his shrill and tipsy wife,—
Luring us by stories old,
With a comic uncton told,
More than by the eloquence
Of terse birchen arguments
(Doubtful gain, I fear), to look
With complacence on a book ! * * *

I,—the man of middle years,
In whose sable locks appears
Many a warning fleck of gray,—
Looking back to that far day,
And thy primal lessons, feel
Grateful smiles my lips unseal.

V

His "In School-Days" gives us another picture.

Still sits the school-house by the road*,
A ragged beggar sunning ;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
And blackberry-vines are running.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
Deep scarred by raps official ;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knife's carved initial ;

The charcoal frescos on its wall :
Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing !

Long years ago a winter sun
Shown over it at setting ;
Lit up its western window-panes,
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed
When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy
Her childish favor singled ;
His cap pulled low upon a face .
Where pride and shame were mingled

Pushing with restless feet the snow
To right and left, he lingered ;—

* The old brown school-house is now no more, having been removed to make room for a reservoir.

As restlessly her tiny hands
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes ; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice,
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word :
I hate to go above you,
Because,"—the brown eyes lower fell,—
"Because, you see, I love you !"

VI

In 1826, when he was nineteen years old, he sent a poem to the Newburyport *Free Press*, which William Lloyd Garrison had just established. It was published, and another which was sent impressed the editor so much that he drove to the boy's home, and urged him to obtain further education. But Whittier's father was poor, and in order to earn the money, he learned of a young man who worked on the farm to make women's shoes. He thus got together enough to pay for a suit of clothes, and for board and tuition for six months at Haverhill academy, where he went in April, 1827. He was one of the larger boys, awkward and bashful, but generally liked and looked up

to as one who had "written for the newspaper". He was always kind to the smaller pupils, and had a love of fun and a keen sense of humor under his grave and quiet exterior. He boarded with the editor of the *Haverhill Gazette*, and wrote poems for it.

VII

After the term had ended, in the autumn of 1827 he taught for a term the district school at West Amesbury, now Merrimac. In the spring of 1828 he returned to the academy for another six months. In the autumn his friend Garrison found a place for him in Boston as writer for and practically editor of the *American Manufacturer*, an advocate of protection to home industry, where his salary was \$9 a week. In June, 1829, he returned home, and remained until July, 1830, editing during the first six months the *Haverhill Gazette*, and writing verse and prose for the *New England Review*, of Hartford. In July, 1830, he became editor of the *Review*, and held that position for a year and a half, giving it up in January, 1832, on account of ill-health and because he was needed at home.

VIII

About this time he became absorbed in the anti-slavery cause, and for twenty years he turned aside from a literary life to devote himself to abolition, as it was termed. He was, he says :

Called from dream and song,
Thank God ! so early to a strife so long,
That, ere it closed, the black, abundant hair
Of boyhood rested silver-sown and spare
On manhood's temples.

He did this in full consciousness of what it would cost him as an author, and said himself, "For twenty years my name would have injured the circulation of any of the literary or political journals in the country."

Bryant says : "He made himself the champion of the slave when to say aught against the national curse was to draw upon one's self the bitterest hatred, loathing, and contempt of the great majority



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, 1794-1878 of men throughout the land."

Samuel J. May declares that of all our



SAMUEL JOSEPH MAY, 1797-1871

poets he "has from first to last done most for the abolition of slavery. All my anti-slavery brethren, I doubt not, will unite with me to crown him as our laureate."

IX

In 1833 he published at his own expense a pamphlet on the abolition of slavery, of which Lewis Tappan of New York afterwards brought out an edition of 10,000 for gratuitous distribution. On Dec. 4 the American Anti-Slavery Society was formed in Philadelphia. Whittier was one of the secretaries, and one of a committee to draw up a declaration of principles. He afterwards described this convention in the *Atlantic Monthly* for Feb., 1874.

He passed the year 1834 on the farm. In April an anti-slavery society was formed at

Haverhill, and Whittier was made corresponding secretary. The feeling of the time is shown by Mr. May, in his "Recollections of the Anti-Slavery Conflict". He tells of a meeting he tried to hold there one Sabbath night, when stones were thrown through the blinds and windows till the audience rose and rushed for the doors. Whittier's young sister Elizabeth would not leave Mr. May in spite of the panic, but passed out of the church on his arm.

Whittier himself was not present, as he was holding an anti-slavery meeting in New Hampshire ; but he also met with similar reception. It was about this time that Garrison was dragged through the streets of Boston with a rope around his neck, and was rescued by the police, who hurried him into jail as the only place of safety.

Whittier went to Philadelphia to edit the *Pennsylvania Freeman*. The office was sacked and burned by a mob in May, 1838. With little delay the publication was resumed, and he remained there for more than a year, when failing health compelled him to give up the editorship and return home.

X

The Whittier of those days could hardly be recognized in the peaceful, loving, Quaker-poet best known to this generation. But he says of himself :

Without intending any disparagement of my peaceable ancestry for many generations, I have still strong suspicions that somewhat of the old Norman blood, something of the grim Berserker spirit, has been bequeathed to me. How else can I account for the intense childish eagerness with which I listened to the stories of old campaigners who fought their battles over again in my hearing ? . . . I can account for it only on the supposition that the mischief was inherited—an heirloom from the old sea-kings of the ninth century.

Nor did he ever regret the sacrifice he made. In a letter to the *New York Nation* he said in 1867 :

I cannot be sufficiently thankful to the divine Providence that so early called my attention to the great interests of humanity, saving me from the poor ambition and miserable jealousies of a selfish pursuit of literary reputation. Up to a comparatively recent period my writings have been simply episodic, something apart from the real object and aim of my life ; and whatever of favor they have found with the public has come to me as a grateful surprise rather than as an expected reward.

XI

In spite of his abolitionism he was elected to the State legislature in 1835 and in 1836, declining the election in 1837; and was for many years an active politician, a keen judge of character, unselfish, and always looking at affairs with the eyes of a man of the people rather than with those of a student.

In 1840 the old homestead was sold and the family removed to Amesbury, partly for the sake of being near the Friends' meeting house, the poet joining them. The next four or five years were filled with earnest work for anti-slavery, though he was in straitened circumstances, depending upon his pen for his support. In 1844 he lived for six months in Lowell writing for the *Middlesex Standard*, a liberty paper. The election of 1844 brought up the question of the Mexican war and the extension of slavery, and his verses at this time were full of vigor against both. From 1847 to 1857 he was one of the corresponding editors of the *National Era* of Washington, during which period "Uncle Tom's Cabin" appeared as a serial, and contributions were

frequent from Alice and Phœbe Cary, Lucy Larcom, Grace Greenwood, and Gail Hamilton. Whittier wrote more than eighty poems for it, including "Maud Muller", "Ichabod", and a great deal of prose work, including "Literary Recreations", and "Margart Smith's Journal". This last was the best of his prose work, but is of small value compared with his poems.

XI

Kennedy divides his poems into four periods: the first introductory, 1830-33; the second, storm and stress, 1833-53; the third transition, 1853-60; and the fourth, religious and artistic repose, 1860 to his death.

His early poems are not remarkable. That on "The Deity", the first which Garrison published for him, is only a paraphrase of the passage from the 19th chapter of the First Book of Kings, in which the forceful poetry of the original is diluted. His poetic instinct instead of springing forth full-armed, like Bryant's, was developed slowly.

XII

His anti-slavery verses were abundant. As May says :

From 1832 to the close of our dreadful war in 1865 his harp of liberty was never hung up : not an important occasion escaped him ; every significant incident drew from his heart some pertinent, and often very impressive or rousing verses.

Kennedy says :

There is nothing in American literature, unless it be the anti-slavery papers of Thoreau, which equals the sevenfold heated moral indignation of Whittier's poems on slavery ; there is a wild melody in them like that of highland pibrochs ; now plaintively and piteously pleading, and now burning with passion, irony, satire, scorn ; here glowing with tropical imagery, as in "Toussaint L'Ouverture", and "The Slaves of Martinique", and there rising into lofty moral atmospheres of faith when all seemed dark and hopeless⁴.

XIII

All this time Whittier regarded poetry as a means, not an end. Mr. Underwood says, "His aim had been to reach the hearts of men, and poetic diction had been only the feathering of the arrows⁵."

Stedman says :



ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING,
1809-1861

His imperfections were those of his time and class, and he was too engrossed with a mission to overcome them. He never learned compression, and still is troubled more with fatal fluency than our other poets of equal rank, by an inability to reject poor stanzas and to stop at the right place. Mrs.

Browning was a prominent sufferer in this respect. The two poets were so much alike, with their indifference to method and taste, as to suggest the question (especially in view of the subaltern reform-verse-makers) whether advocates of causes, and other people of great moral zeal, are not relatively deficient in artistic conscientiousness, and in what may be called æsthetic rectitude. There came a period when Whittier's verse was composed solely with poetic intent and after a less careless fashion. It is chiefly that portion, written from 1860 onward, that has secured him a more than local reputation^e.

XIV

Yet, as the writer of the obituary in the *New York Nation* pointed out, the strong

tonic of the anti-slavery agitation gave a training in directness, simplicity, and genuineness. It taught him to shorten his sword, and to produce strong effects by common means.

Two of these poems, "Ichabod" and "The Lost Ocasion", refer to Daniel Webster, whose action upon slavery in the United States senate brought grief to his Massachusetts friends. "Ichabod" (1851) has been called the purest and profoundest moral lament in modern literature, whether American or European, the grief of angels in arms over a traitor brother slain on the battlefields of heaven^s.

XV

ICHABOD !

So fallen ! so lost ! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore !
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore !

Reville him not—the Tempter hath
A snare for all ;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall !

Oh ! dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might

Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn ! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven !

Let not the land once proud of him,
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, nought
Save power remains—
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone ; from those great eyes
The soul has fled :
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead !

Then pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame ;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame !

XVI

Linton thus contrasts his work with that of Poe :



EDGAR ALLAN POE, 1809-1847

In Poe, helped it may be by his native gift, we see the admirable result of much study of words, rhythms, and assonances, mellifluous, meaningless jingles, pleasant to musical ears, this and but little else ; in the other

we find high thoughts, noble lessons (of which true poetry—not therefore didactic—is never void), and everywhere the outcome of gentle and heroic thought, preaching to us not as the preacher, but as storm and sunshine, sky and flowers, and the various aspects of grand woods, and the line of mountain beauty preach to us, speaking in masculine music to our souls. The difference between the two poets (the name given to both) is the wide difference between the sound that tickles the ears and the divine word that touches the heart^a.

XVII

In 1849 he published his anti-slavery poems under the title “Voices of Freedom”. The next year he published his “Songs of

Labor", a volume which showed that his mind had become calmed by time, and was now capable of interesting itself in other than reform subjects. The reader feels at once the breath of a fresher spirit, as a traveller who has been toiling for weary leagues through sandy deserts bares his brow with delight to the coolness and shade of a green forest through whose thick roof of leaves the garish sunlight scarcely sifts. The wrath of the reformer has expended itself, and the poet now returns, with mind elevated and more tensely keyed with his moral warfare to the study of the beautiful in native themes and in home life⁴.

XVIII

In the decade from 1858 to 1868 he wrote most of his ballads. Stedman calls him of all our poets the most natural balladist, Holmes coming next. His ballads "have a spontaneity, a subtle pathos, a sublimated sweetness of despair, that take hold of the very heart strings." "He has developed of late years the precious power of creating homely beauty, one of the rarest powers shown in modern literature. Homely life-

scenes, homely old sanctities of heroisms, he takes up, delineates them with his intrepid fidelity in their homeliness, and lo! there they are, beautiful as Indian corn or as plowed land under an October sun⁸."

Kennedy says :

His strength lies in his moral nature, and in his



power to tell a story melodiously, simply, and sweetly. Such ballads as "The Witch's Daughter" and "Telling the Bees" are as absolutely faultless productions as Wordsworth's "We are Seven", and his "Lucy Gray", or as Uhland's "Des Sanger's Fluch", or

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1770-1850

William Blake's "Mary". There is in them the confident and unconscious ease that marks the work of the highest genius. A shower of lucid water drops falls in no truer obedience to the law of perfect sphericity than flowed from the pen of the poet these delicate creations in obedience to the law of perfect spontaneity⁴.

XIX

Maud Muller is the best known of his bal-

lads. It tells the story of the judge who asked a drink of water of the barefooted farm girl making hay. The meeting makes them both wistful, and the final couplet is repeatedly quoted :

For of all sad words of tongue or pen

The saddest are these, "It might have been."

This ballad has the distinction of being parodied perhaps oftener than any other that was ever written. Even Bret Harte did not disdain to write a sequel, entitled "Mrs. Judge Jenkins", in which Maud married the judge; but on the day that they were mated Maud's brother Bob was intoxicated. And when the summer came again the young bride bore him babies twain; and the judge was blessed, but thought it strange that bearing children made such a change. For Maud grew broad, and red, and stout; and the waist that his arm once clasped about was more than he now could span; and he sighed as he pondered ruefully, how that which in Maud has native grace, in Mrs. Jenkins was out of place; and thought of the twins, and wished that they looked less like the man who raked the hay on Muller's farm; and

dreamed with pain of the day he wandered
down the lane. If of all sad words of tongue
and pen the saddest are, "It might have
been", more sad are those we daily see,—
"It is, but it hadn't ought to be."

It will be noticed that Bret Harte follows
in the rhyme Mr. Whittier's mispronunciation
of "been".

Phoebe Carey, too, parodied it in "Kate
Ketchum", who

On a winter's night
Went to a party dressed in white.
Her chignon in a net of gold
Was about as large as they ever sold.

She angles for Tom Fudge, whom she
supposes to be rich, and he angles for her,
and they marry, each to find that the other
is a poverty-stricken schemer. Her conclusion
is :

For of all hard things to bear and grin
The hardest is knowing you're taken in.
Ah well ! as a general thing we fret
About the one we didn't get ;
But I think we needn't make a fuss
If the one we don't want didn't get us.

XX

Except for "The Henchman", written when he was 70 years old, "Maud Muller", and "Among the Hills", in which, on the other hand, a city woman falls in love with a manly farmer, are Whittier's nearest approaches to depicting the master passion, love. "The song of the Quaker bard is almost virginal⁶."

He never married, and his tenderest feeling seemed to have been for his sister Elizabeth, "our youngest and our dearest" in "Snowbound", who had charge of the poet's home for many years. She was a woman of lovely character, and fully sympathized with her brother in his literary work. Parton says he was accustomed to submit to her criticism the first copies of whatever he wrote⁷.

His poems throughout breathe toward woman the chivalrous spirit of the gentlest soul, but there is no evidence that he ever found

That not impossible she
Who shall command my heart and me.

XXI

The simplicity and earnestness of his songs made them peculiarly available for hymns, and some of them will be found in almost every collection. Kennedy says :

Many of Whittier's purely religious poems are the most exquisite and beautiful ever written. The tender feeling, the warm-hearted trustfulness, and the reverent touch of his hymns speak directly to our hearts. The prayer hymn at the close of "The Brewing of Soma", and such poems as "At Last" and "The Wish of To-day", are unsurpassed in sacred song⁴.

XXII

These stanzas from "Gone" are printed in the "Unitarian Hymn and Tune Book".

Another hand is beckoning us,
Another call is given ;
And glows once more with Angel-steps
The path which reaches heaven.

And half we deemed she needed not
The changing of her sphere,
To give to Heaven a Shining One,
Who walked an Angel here.

Alone unto our Father's will
One thought hath reconciled ;
That he whose love exceedeth ours
Hath taken home his child.

Fold her, oh Father ! in thine arms,
 And let her henceforth be
 A messenger of love between
 Our human hearts and Thee.

Still let her mild rebuking stand
 Between us and the wrong,
 And her dear memory serve to make
 Our faith in goodness strong.

XXIII

Stedman says :

Whittier is the Galahad of modern poets, not emasculate, but vigorous and pure ; he has borne Christian's shield of faith and sword of the Spirit. He celebrates all brave deeds and acts of renunciation ; the heroism of martyrs and resisters, of the Huguenots, the Vaudois, the Quakers, the English reformers, serve him for many a song and ballad. At every pause after some new devotion, after some supreme offering by one of his comrades, it was the voice of Whittier that sang the psalm and the requiem. It was by the common choice of our poets that he wrote the centennial hymn. No one else would venture where the priest of song alone should go. The composition begins imposingly :

Our fathers' God ! from out whose hand
 The centuries fall like grains of sand ;

and it is difficult to see how a poem for sacred music or for such an occasion could be more adequately wrought⁶.

XXIV

When secession came and war followed
Whittier would have left the South to secede,
and did not approve of armed defence. In
"A word for the Hour", he said :

Let us press
The golden cluster on our brave old flag
In closer union, and, if numbering less,
Brighter shall shine the stars which still remain.

Hampered as he was by the Quaker theory
of non-resistance, when he saw Col. Shaw
ride forth at the head of the colored troops
he said, "I have longed to speak the emotions
of that hour, but I dared not lest I should
give a new impulse to the war."

Yet he found many occasions to write.
His "Song of the Negro Boatmen" was set
to music and sung from Maine to California,
and its weird chorus yet lingers in many
ears. Of all his poems "Barbara Frietchie"
is perhaps the most over-estimated. The
incident was given to him by Mrs. South-
worth, the novelist, and was as unreal as any-
thing in her novels. The picture of Stone-
wall Jackson, flushing as though detected in

a guilty act, is now known to the North as well as the South to be unworthy of his noble nature.

XXV

Undoubtedly his best single work is "Snowbound", truly "a winter idyl".

Those who criticize his pastoral spirit as lacking Bryant's breadth of tone, Emerson's penetration, and Thoreau's details, confess that it is honest and that it comes by nature⁶. Burroughs says "Snowbound" is the "most faithful picture of our Northern winter that has yet been put into poetry." Stedman says :

It gives an ideal reproduction of the inner life of an old-fashioned American rustic home, not a peasant home,—far above that in refinement and potentialities,—but equally simple, frugal, and devout; a home of which no other land has furnished the coadequate type.

Taken as a whole it is his most complete production, and a worthy successor to "The Deserted Village", and "The Cotter's Saturday Night"⁷.

XXVI

It is worth noting that Burns was the first



ROBERT BURNS, 1759-1796

poet whom Whittier knew, and always his favorite, as already shown (page 327).

This is how he came to know the Scotch poet. One afternoon he was gathering in hay on the farm, when a wandering peddler stopped and took from his pack a copy of Burns's poems. The boy eagerly purchased it; and alluding to the circumstance afterwards in his poem, "Burns," he says :

How oft that day, with fond delay,
I sought the maple's shadow,
And sang with Burns the hours away,
Forgetful of the meadow !

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead
I heard the squirrels leaping,
The good dog listened while I read,
And wagged his tail in keeping.

XXVII

Parkman called him "the poet of New



FRANCIS PARKMAN, 1823-1893

England", saying:
 "his genius drew
 its nourishment
 from her soil; his
 pages are the mir-
 ror of her outward
 nature, and the
 strong utterance
 of her inward
 life".

Stedman makes this comparison :

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW,
1807-1882

"As a poet of
 New England
 Whittier has little
 competition from
 the bookish Long-
 fellow, except for
 the latter's sincere
 feeling for the
 eastern sea and
 shore, and artistic
 handling of the
 courtlier legends of the province. He cer-
 tainly found a compeer in Lowell, whose dia-
 lect idyls prove that only genius is needed



JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, 1819-1891
New England sentiment which has extended itself, an ideal influence, with the movement of its inheri-

to enable a scholar, turned farmer, to extract the richest products of the soil ; and the lyric fervor of Lowell's odes is our most imaginative expression of that



RALPH WALDO EMERSON, 1803-1882
than whom no scholar is less given to looseness of expression, terms Whittier the poet of New England, as if by eminence, and I think with

tors, to the farthest West. Emerson, on his part, has volatilized the essence of New England thought into wreaths of spiritual beauty. Yet Mr. Parkman,

exceeding justice. The title is based on apt recognition of evidence that we look to the people at large for the substance of national or sectional traits. The base, not the peak of the pyramid, determines its bearings^e ”.

XXVIII

He wrote altogether nearly 400 poems. In 1849 a collection of his poems was published by B. B. Mussey & Co., Mr. Mussey being a prominent freesoiler. When Mr. Mussey died in 1855 the plates were purchased by Ticknor & Fields. When the complete edition of his poems was published in 1857, in his fiftieth year, he had reached a position of recognized eminence. He was invited to join in the organization of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and gave the aid of his work and name, in company with Longfellow, Lowell, Emerson, Holmes, Prescott, Motley, and Trowbridge. From this time on his work was well paid for, and in 1883 his publishers bought his copyright then existing, and for the future, at the same rate they paid to Longfellow and Lowell, \$5,000 a year².

XXIX

He wrote several poems for children, such as "King Solomon and the Ants", "Red Riding Hood" and "The Robin", and made two books of selections for them. Another compilation, "Songs of Three Centuries", 1876, shows his preferences among his fellow poets. Of his own verse he prefers the "Grave by the Lake", from the "Tent on the Beach", "My Birthday", "The Vanishers", "In School-Days", "Laus Deo", and "The Eve of Election".

His last verses were written Aug. 29, 1892, nine days before his death, to Oliver Wendell Holmes. Here is a characteristic stanza :

Sorrow is real ; but the counterfeit,
Which folly brings to it,
We need thy wit and wisdom to resist
O rarest Optimist !

XXX

Nearly all his life Whittier was an invalid, the overwork of his early journalistic days having brought on neuralgia and headache. For many years he could not write fifteen



JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER
1807-1892

minutes at a time without headache, which accounts for the lack of finish in his earlier works, and perhaps for the fact that much was left in which more careful revision would have left out. A

stroke of paralysis on Sept. 3, 1892, deprived him of the use of one arm, and affected the muscles of the throat, so that, unable to swallow, he was prevented from taking nourishment. He passed peacefully away on Dec. 7, able even to the last to recognize the friends around him. Among his pall bearers were Samuel J. May, Stedman, and Lucy Larcom. The services were conducted in the plain and quiet way of the society of Friends, for like Walt Whitman and Bayard Taylor he was of Quaker parentage, and unlike them he remained a Quaker to the last. In his will he says that he was connected with that sect not only by

birthright, but also by a settled conviction of the truth of its principles and the importance of its testimonies. He always held to the prescribed garb, so far as the cut of his coat was concerned, but conformed in other ways to the custom of the world².

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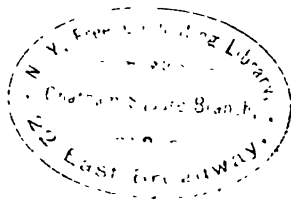
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